



VMSA RESOURCE SHEET

INDEX TO RESOURCE SHEETS

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VMSEA RESOURCE SHEET

WHO IS THE VMSEA, WHAT DO THEY DO & WHY SHOULD WE BE A MEMBER?

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The Victorian Men's Shed Association is the State Peak Body that represents the 350 (325 operating and 25 in start-up) community owned and managed Men's Sheds in Victoria

These sheds represent approximately 17,500 individual shedders in Victoria.

Our vision

The VMSEA's vision is:

...for all Victorian men to be happy and healthy contributors within their local community

Our mission

The VMSEA's mission is:

...to provide a forum for Victorian sheds to network, exchange ideas, share experiences, and promote wellbeing

Our statement of purpose

The VMSEA's statement of purpose is

Men's sheds are community-based, non-profit and non-commercial groups, either independently incorporated or operating under the auspices of another organisation.

Men's sheds encourage Victorian men to be happy and healthy contributors within their local community. They play an important role in the community by providing a place where men can find camaraderie and support.

The VMSEA provides a forum for Victorian men's sheds to exchange ideas, share resources, network and find support. We promote the profile of sheds and 'shedding' within the Victorian community, and represent the interests of Victorian sheds to government, businesses and community organisations. We also provide practical advice, assistance and support for sheds.

Membership of the VMSEA is open to all men's sheds in Victoria. However, the VMSEA does not have any direct control over – or responsibility for – individual sheds.

The VMSEA works willingly and closely with others to further the national profile of sheds

We value the skills and acknowledge the support of all individuals, including the many women who have and continue to contribute to the development of men's sheds and the men's shed movement throughout Victoria.

What does the VMSA do?

In keeping with our statement of purpose the VMSA provides a forum for Victorian men's sheds to exchange ideas, share resources, network and find support.

This is achieved via the following:

- The VMSA website www.vmsa.org.au
- The VMSA Facebook page www.facebook.com/groups/376075325824722/
- Via our regional gathering of sheds (held 3 times per annum at various locations around the state)
- Via special interest events and days such as Melbourne Steam and Traction Engine, Mornington Railway Preservation Society, Melbourne Storm Rugby events
- Via the various regional cluster meetings held across the state
- Via a monthly radio show on 3WBC 94.1 FM (1st Saturday of each month)

We promote the profile of sheds and “shedding” within the Victorian community, and represent the interests of Victorian sheds to government, businesses and community organisations.

This is achieved via the following:

- Working with the Victorian Government to obtain funding under the Strengthening Men's Shed Program, to provide funding grants of up to \$60,000 to assist building new sheds, and up to \$30,000 to assist with the refurbishment of an existing building. This funding has been available since 2007, and has seen in excess of 280 applicants secure funding under this program.
- By building relationship with business that has seen the donation of in excess of \$75,000 of superseded, demonstration, and new products being made available to sheds from organisations such as Bosch Australia, Ozito Industries over the past 12 months.
- A relationships has also been formed with a supplier of sandpaper that has seen the offcuts used in the manufacture of sanding belts and sanding discs being donated via the VMSA for distribution to the sheds across the state. This has also included grinding discs and sanding blocks and has seen in excess of \$30,000 of retail purchases being distributed by the VMSA over the last 12 months.
- The VMSA has also worked with other philanthropic organisations, and 1 in particular has provided funding to the VMSA to allow for the purchase and distribution of 40 defibrillator machines over the past 3 years.
- The VMSA as the Victorian Peak body advocates on behalf of Men's Sheds with many of the State Government Departments, including Consumer Affairs, Department of Health and Human Services, Commissioner for Senior Victorians, Parks Victoria, Department of Premier and Cabinet, and Department of Environment Land and Water. The VMSA also works with Ministers, State Government Departments with advice on policy development.
- The VMSA also works with other community organisations such as Justice Connect, Pro Bono Australia, Our Community, and the Institute of Community Directors Australia.
- The VMSA also receives numerous calls from deceased estates and businesses looking for sheds that may be interested in obtaining preloved tools and equipment. These calls are redirected to the applicable sheds in the local area, or collected via the VMSA Committee and advertised via the VMSA website, Facebook page and newsletter.

We also provide practical advice, assistance and support for sheds.

This is achieved via:

- Email, and telephone access to the VMSA Executive officer and committee members
- When required and where practical visitation by the Executive Officer or committee member
- By utilisation of our knowledge of existing sheds within the network that are capable of providing assistance and support

The area's that practical advice, assistance and support may include

The establishment of new sheds

- Including advice on community consultation and community support
- Advice of the legal structures available for the shed group
- Assistance with the preparation of Memorandum of Understandings for:
 - a) Operating under an auspice arrangement
 - b) building occupancies
 - c) working with external organisations – disability groups Work for the Dole
 - d) sub leasing to other parties
- Potential avenues to find a property to operate from
- How to establish process and procedure manuals
- Establishing OH&S manuals and induction procedures for new member
- How to prepare budgets and strategic plans
- Understanding the roles and responsibilities of being a committee member
- Identifying potential fundraising opportunities
- Identifying grant opportunities
- Understanding and identifying Insurance options
- Understanding reporting requirements
- How to network with and obtain support from local councils, local members of Parliament, and other local community groups
- Assistance with dignitaries for shed openings

Once established this support can include areas such as:

- Setting up websites and email address
- Meeting Procedures
- Understanding the requirements of an Annual General Meeting and the election and motion process
- Understanding Consumer Affairs model club rules
- Dispute resolution
- Supplier contacts for purchasing or upgrading new equipment
- Assistance with the preparation of funding and grant applications

Why should we be a member?

There are a number of reasons for a shed to be a member of the VMSA and these include:

- To have a voice in the future of Men's sheds in Victoria
- To access the knowledge and resources of the VMSA staff and committee members
- To access document and how to guides that will be available on the website – being developed
- Subscription to the VMSA newsletter to access the latest information on what is happening and the identification of potential funding sources.
- Assistance with preparation and content for grant submissions
- Attend VMSA State-wide Gatherings
- To participate in the distribution of tools and equipment and materials donated to the VMSA.
- \$10.00 meal subsidy for each Shedder of a VMSA Member shed at State-wide Gatherings
- Ability for shed members to receive National Fleet Discount on the purchase of new Hyundai vehicles
- Access to the AJ Gallagher Men's Shed Insurance package
- Access to the Jobs Australia Men's Shed Insurance package
- Redirection of enquiries for membership, partnership or donations to your shed received by the VMSA, via phone or email, such as enquiries from do something near you.

The cost of VMSA membership is \$55.00 per financial year.



VMSEA RESOURCE SHEET

A GUIDE TO STARTING A MEN'S SHED

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Starting a Men's shed is not an easy task, and many obstacles will fall across your path, this document tries to help assist with the necessary steps to form a Men's Shed group

Research and Evaluation

- Form the idea to start a Men's Shed
- Talk to the VMSEA we are a great source of information and contacts
- Find some supporters or likeminded people to assist
- Talk to the VMSEA
- Find supporters or advocates within your community – Community Health organisations, community service organisations, Lions, Rotary, Probus, U3A, local church groups.
- Talk to your local council
- Talk to your local State and Federal Government Members of Parliament
- Form a steering committee
- Visit other Men's sheds in the area – look how they have their building set up, look at the layout of equipment, activities being worked on, ask questions, what worked, what didn't work, talk about what you are trying to achieve, you may find potential projects, potential supporters
- Hold a public information session or 2, to let the community know what is being looked at.
- Have an Expression of interest form for attendees details
- Ask if anybody interested in joining the formation committee
- If yes, expand your steering committee
- Ask if anybody knows any potential sites
- Ask if anybody knows of potential sponsors or supporters
- Define the potential activities that can be conducted in the shed
- Look into the rules and regulation to become an Incorporated Association / or look at potential Auspicing Bodies – Health Service, Neighbourhood House, Church or Service Organisation
- Look into the costs associated with Insurance
- Look at your target market

NOW IS THERE ENOUGH INTEREST TO START A SHED IN YOUR AREA?

IF YES PROCEED TO PLANNING

This would normally have taken 3 – 6 months to get this far

PLANNING

Now that the above research and evaluation has been completed, and you have the support of the community and interested parties to work and establish a Men's Shed, let's start planning the shed:

At this point in our journey we are looking into the following items:

- Where are the potential sites that may be available?
- What potential land is available to build on?
- What size building do we need?
- Design a rough layout, allowing for work areas, storage room, a kitchen / quiet area, meeting area, look at toilet requirements, look at car parking, look at disability access and electrical power requirements

- Talk to the councils building department on their requirements
- Talk to builders obtain pricings and a time line of building / renovation requirements.
- Where can you get funding to assist with building of a shed or the redevelopment costs?
- Identify fundraising options that may be available
- Is the shed to become an Incorporated Association?
- Is the shed to be auspiced by another organisation?
- What activities are going to be conducted at the shed, seek consultation from the potential members
- Identify what tools and equipment is required to fit out the shed?
- Preparation of a budget coving building / renovation costs and costs for equipment materials and fit out costs, such as toilets, kitchen, pathways, veranda, etc.
- Look at establishing policies and procedures including OH &S requirements
- Develop a Business / Strategic plan
- Look at what is needed in regards to council permits, building permit, planning permit, are there any restrictions on the land, historical overlay, flood plain, easements, is a soil test required etc.

Now we know we have a need for a shed, and we know what will be happening in the shed as far as activities, now we come to the action plan

ACTION

This is where all the past talks and discussions come together, and the really hard work starts.

- Lodge documents to become an Incorporated Association
- Apply for an ABN Number
- Once approved and certificate is received you are now a legal entity and can enter into contracts and open bank accounts
- Investigate if you need to register for GST (normally not if turnover is less than \$150,000 pa)
- Obtain letters of support from Local Council, State and Federal MP's
- Finalise your Business / Strategic Plan
- Complete funding applications for the building / refurbishment of the shed
- Complete Planning Permit application
- Continue with committee meetings to develop policy and procedure documents
- Obtain Insurance coverage
- Once funding has been approved, engage your builder and complete building permit application
- Appoint a person or subcommittee to work with and liaise between the builder and the Committee
- Look at social media options such as Facebook and a Website to enable updates and show your progress
- Continue to have information sessions and update prospective members partners and sponsors where you are at
- Continue with fundraising efforts, to increase funding available for equipment and tools

FUNDING APPROVED

Now that funding has been approved for your building, you now have the building / renovation to plan

- Confirm your project management team
- Ensure the plan are the current version
- Have all your permits been approved?
- Engage your builder and appropriate sub-contractors
- Keep a tight eye on the finances
- Issue purchase orders for all purchases
- Ensure all payments are made by due dates
- Sub Committee to discuss and identify potential layout of shed equipment
- Continue fundraising to cover cost of fit out
- Source quotations for new equipment, tools fixtures and fittings.



VMSA RESOURCE SHEET

SHOULD YOU INCORPORATE?

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Please note that this resource sheet is for guidance only and has been copied direct from the Consumer Affairs Website, please click on [Consumer Affairs Victoria](#) for further information

Incorporating your club is not compulsory. If you do incorporate, there are rules you must follow.

Becoming an incorporated association is not suitable for organisations that are formed to, or operate mostly to, make a profit for their members.

The table below has information to help you decide whether incorporating is the right option for your club or group.

Things to consider	If you incorporate	If you do not incorporate
Membership	Your organisation must have at least five members.	Your organisation can have any number of members.
Not-for-profit status	Your organisation may trade, but not in order to distribute profit to its members.	Your organisation is not restricted from trading or doing business for personal profit.
Legal status	<p>Your organisation becomes a 'legal person' (that is, a legal entity that stays the same even if its members change). It can do the following things in its own name:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accept gifts or bequests • buy and sell property • invest and borrow money • open a bank account • sue and be sued • take out public liability insurance with greater ease. 	<p>Your organisation cannot do any of the things described under 'if you incorporate', at left. These would have to be done by an individual member on behalf of the unincorporated association's members.</p> <p>A member of an unincorporated association is usually personally liable for contracts they enter into and decisions they make.</p>
Legal protection for members	Members and office bearers are protected against personal liability for the organisation's debts.	Members could be personally liable if the organisation incurs debts or has legal problems.
Statutory obligations	Your organisation and its office bearers must comply with requirements in the <i>Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012</i> , including accounting, auditing and annual reporting requirements.	Your organisation is not bound by the <i>Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012</i> . However, your organisation is still bound by other state and federal laws, such as tax laws.

Things to consider	If you incorporate	If you do not incorporate
Costs	Your organisation must pay fees for incorporating and lodging some administrative forms. There may also be costs involved in meeting ongoing statutory obligations, such as financial reporting.	Your organisation will not have the expense of meeting statutory obligations of incorporation.
Disputes	Your organisation must either have its own procedure for resolving internal disputes, or use the procedure in the model rules for incorporated associations.	Your organisation is not required to have or use a dispute resolution procedure.
Contracts and agreements	Your organisation can enter into contracts and agreements in its own name. This offers more certainty to potential contracting parties such as lenders, lessors, employees and suppliers of goods and services.	Your organisation cannot enter into contracts or agreements in its own name.
Grants	Your organisation may be eligible to apply for a larger range of government and non-government grants.	Your organisation will not be able to apply for grants that require applicants to be incorporated.

Other options for clubs and community groups

When deciding whether to incorporate, your club or community group can also consider a number of other options:

- becoming a company limited by guarantee. For more information, visit the [Australian Securities and Investments Commission \(ASIC\) website](#)
- becoming a Co-operative. For more information, view our [Co-operatives section](#)
- for Indigenous organisations, becoming an Indigenous Incorporated Association. For more information, visit the [Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations website](#).

Related information

- [The incorporation decision - Justice Connect Not-for-profit Law website](#)
- [Australian Securities and Investments Commission \(ASIC\) website](#)
- [Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations website](#)

This information has been provided by [Consumer Affairs Victoria](#) please click on the link for further information.



VMSSA RESOURCE SHEET

INCORPORATED ASSOCIATIONS VICTORIA

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This document has been prepared to assist sheds by providing a basic understanding of their obligations under the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*.

For further details and information, please refer to the Consumer Affairs Victoria website <https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/clubs-and-fundraising>.

Incorporated Associations Victoria

On 26 November 2012, the old Act was replaced by the Associations Act. This change affects all associations that are incorporated in Victoria. The Associations Act includes a number of key changes including:

- allowing *incorporated associations* to trade, providing profits are used to further the purposes of the associations;
- revising annual reporting and audit requirements;
- replacing the term “public officer” with “secretary”; and
- clarifying the definition of office holders, their duties, and their *indemnity* against *liability*.

A summary of these changes can be found on the CAV website at www.consumer.vic.gov.au

CAV has issued a new set of Model Rules to include these changes. Existing incorporated associations may also need to review their rules to ensure compliance with the requirements with the Act.

Features of an incorporated association

Purpose and membership

An association, as defined by the Associations Act, includes any association, society, club, institution or body formed or carried on for a lawful purpose. The minimum membership of an association is five people.

Legal status

An incorporated association has a legal identity separate from that of its members. Normally, an individual can enter into formal agreements, *sue* (or be sued), buy property and so on, because a person has a legal identity. When a group of people incorporate, that body of people has a collective legal identity. If 10 people form the Buffalo Tom Appreciation Society (BTAS) and then incorporate BTAS, it may sue or be sued, purchase property, enter into agreements and so on, in its own name.

Liability of members

Flowing from the legal status of the incorporated association is an important feature: that the members' *liability* is limited to the annual subscriptions of the members and any other money due under the Rules of Association.

Secretary

All *incorporated associations* must have a Secretary. This role was previously the Public Officer under the old Act. The Secretary is the conduit between the association and those people and organisations that the association deals with. The holding of the office of Secretary does not preclude the holding of another office in the association. The Secretary must be at least 18 years old and a resident of Australia. The Secretary has a number of obligations to the Registrar of Associations, generally having to keep the Registrar informed of certain events and to assist the Registrar in its functions. In particular, the Registrar must be:

- notified of the appointment of the Secretary (within 14 days);
- notified of any change to the Rules of Association (within 28 days), for the Registrar's approval;
- notified within one month of, and give approval for, any change in the name of the association;
- sent the Annual Statement and other required financial information within one month of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the association;
- assisted with the inspection of any books (which includes minutes of meetings, accounting records and similar documents) of the association;
- be informed of any motion to wind-up the association and dispose of its assets (within 28 days of the motion); and
- be informed of any change of address within 14 days.

Purposes of the association

The purposes of the association must be set out in the Rules of the association. This "charter" or "mission" sets out what the association is aiming to achieve, how it intends to do so and what will be the collective "beliefs" of the association. Most groups will simply need to commit to writing answers to the questions that they will have discussed when they decided to form an association including, why do we want to form an association, what do we want to achieve, and how are we going to do it?

The rules of association

The rules of an association govern the rights and responsibilities of the members as well as how the association will operate; they are a *contract* between the incorporated association and its members.

The rules must be divided into paragraphs that are set out in a logical sequence (e.g. in alphabetical order such as paragraph a, b, c, etc., or numerically as in 1, 2, 3, etc.).

An association has a choice to either:

1. completely adopt the Model Rules provided in the *Associations Incorporation Reform Regulations 2012* (Vic). A copy of these Rules can also be found on the CAV website at www.consumer.vic.gov.au; or
2. Partially adopt the Model Rules. The Model Rules may not adequately provide for all of your association's needs. In this situation, your association can legitimately amend the Model Rules to suit its purposes. When making amendments to the Model Rules, the most important matters to keep in mind are simplicity and clarity of language. What is intended to be achieved by the amendment or new clause? Express this aim in the simplest, most unambiguous language. This will assist in avoiding later disputes about what was intended by the Rules; or
3. Draft its own rules, which must contain the matters specified in schedule 1 of the Associations Act.
If an association decides to change the Model Rules to suit its needs then the following information must be included in detail:

- the name and purposes of the association

Membership

- qualifications for membership;
- fees and subscriptions payable by members;
- rights, obligations and liabilities of members;
- the procedure for disciplining members;
- grievance procedures for settling disputes under the rules

Management and recordkeeping

- the name, membership and powers of the committee or other body having the management of the association. This includes the election or appointment, terms of office, vacation of office and filling of casual vacancies of committee members and the *quorum* and meeting procedure of the committee;
- procedures for the appointment and removal of the Secretary;
- the *custody* of records of the association;
- the custody and use of the common seal of the association;
- provision for members to have access to and obtain copies of the records and other documents of the association;
- the preparation and retention of accurate minutes of general meetings and committee meetings

Meetings

- the intervals between General Meetings, the *quorum* and procedure at General Meetings and the rules regarding *proxy* votes;
- the time and manner in which notices of meetings may be given

Funds

- the sources of the association's funding and the management of that funding (in particular, cheque handling)

Alteration of rules

- the procedure for amending or rescinding the rules of the association and of making additional rules

Winding-up or dissolution

- the disposition of any surplus assets upon winding-up.

Activities

An incorporated association cannot be formed with a view to making a profit for its members. In this way it is different from business organisations such as partnerships. The Associations Act prohibits an association from trading or making *pecuniary* profit for its members (with exemptions for charitable organisations in some circumstances). Generally, only non-commercial non- trading organisations will be suited (or would wish) to use the incorporated association structure.

Community organisations can, with certain limitations, participate in a number of activities typically associated with businesses. An association can carry out the following activities, *deemed* by the Associations Act not to be activities with a view to a profit (see the explanation of non-profit above):

- make a profit itself, so long as that profit is not divided among the members;
- buy and sell goods and services, where doing so is ancillary to the principal purpose of the association, provided that the transactions are with members of the public. The transactions must not be substantial in value, unless they are for admission fees, fees to displays, exhibitions, contests, sporting fixtures or other occasions which are organised for the promotion of the purposes of the association;
- protect or regulate a trade, business, industry or calling so long as the association does not engage or take part in that trade, business, industry or calling;
- divide the assets among the members on dissolution of the association;
- pay its members a salary;
- provide members with a monetary benefit if they would be entitled to it notwithstanding their membership of the association; and
- compete for trophies or prizes in contests related to the purposes of the association.

The common seal

In Victoria, it is not legally necessary for incorporated association to have a Common Seal. A Common Seal is simply a stamp showing the association's name and incorporated number, which is used on legal documents. Its purpose is to indicate to people dealing with the association that those documents that feature the Common Seal have been approved by the association.

Where an association chooses to have a Common Seal the Rules of the association must specify the rules regarding its *custody* and use.

Where a document requires authentication by an incorporated association it may be authenticated by the signature of the Secretary and does not need to be authenticated by the use of the Common Seal.

Identifying the association

All *incorporated associations* must have a registered address. An association must display its name and incorporation number on all its notices, business documents and official publications, including its letterhead.

Meetings

All *incorporated associations* must hold an AGM. An association's first AGM may be held within 18 months of incorporation. Subsequent AGMs must be held within five months *after* the end of the association's financial year. An association may apply to the Registrar for an extension of time for holding an AGM.

Regardless of the formality or content of the meeting, the following information must be submitted to the members:

- the income and expenditure of the association during the previous financial year;
- the assets and liabilities of the association at the end of the previous financial year;
- whether there are any *mortgages*, charges or securities affecting property owned by the association at the end of the previous financial year; and
- details of the above information concerning any *trusts* of which the association was the trustee during the previous financial year.

Details of the AGM must be lodged by the Secretary with the Registrar within one month of the date of the AGM. The Secretary must lodge a Statement with the Registrar that sets out when the AGM was held, details of the compulsory financial information set out above, certification that they were presented to the AGM, the resolutions relating to the financial statements and the lodgement fee.

Annual General Meeting

All *incorporated associations* must hold an AGM. An association's first AGM may be held within 18 months of incorporation. Subsequent AGMs must be held within five months *after* the end of the association's financial year. An association may apply to the Registrar for an extension of time for holding an AGM.

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- the assets and liabilities of the association at the end of the previous financial year;
- whether there are any *mortgages*, charges or securities affecting property owned by the association at the end of the previous financial year; and
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Minutes of meetings

Incorporated associations must prepare and keep accurate minutes of all meetings (including general and committee meetings). The minutes should be confirmed by members in attendance as an accurate record of the meeting.

Financial reporting

New financial reporting requirements for associations were introduced by the Associations Act.

The committee must ensure that financial statements are prepared at the end of the association's financial year. The association's financial statements must include the following:

- the income and expenditure of the association;
- the balance sheet (assets and liabilities) of the association;
- any *mortgages*, charges and securities affecting any property of the association;
- the income and expenditure, assets and liabilities and any mortgages, charges and securities of any *trust* for which the association was a trustee; and
- details of any trust holding association funds or assets, held on its behalf by another person or body.

The committee must be satisfied that the financial statements give a 'true and fair' view of the association's financial position and performance.

Depending on the total revenue of the association (from all its activities during the last financial year) additional financial reporting requirements may also apply. The Associations Act establishes a three-tiered reporting framework:

- **Tier one:** less than \$250,000;
- **Tier two:** \$250,000–\$1,000,000;
- **Tier three:** more than \$1,000,000.

Tier one associations do not have any additional reporting requirements. They do not need to have their financial statements externally reviewed or audited unless:

- required by the rules of the association;
- a majority of members vote to do so at a general meeting; or
- directed to do so by Consumer Affairs Victoria.

Tier two associations must have their accounts reviewed by an independent accountant. The accountant's report must be presented to members at the AGM. Tier two associations do not have to audit their accounts unless required by the Rules of the association.

Tier three associations must have their accounts audited by an independent auditor. The audit report must be presented to members at the AGM. The auditor must be appropriately qualified and must be:

- a registered company auditor or firm;
- a member (holding a Public Practice Certificate) of CPA Australia or the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia, or
- someone approved by the Registrar.

The auditor must also be independent, so the auditor must NOT be:

- a member of the committee of the association;
- an employer or an employee of a member of the committee;
- a member of the same partnership as a member of the committee; or
- an employee of the association.

An incorporated association may only remove its auditor from office by resolution passed at a general meeting of the association. Two months advance notice of the proposed resolution must be provided to all members, the auditor and the Registrar.

How to incorporate

Who has authority to apply?

Any person who is 18 or over, lives in Australia and has been authorised by a majority of the group's members can apply for incorporation.

Holding a meeting

A meeting of the members (a minimum of five) should be held to appoint a Secretary who is authorised to make the application for incorporation and approve the Rules of Association. Members should be given 21 days notice of the meeting and all resolutions must be passed by at least a simple majority (that is, one more than half the people present either in person or by proxy). Minutes of the meeting (that is, a written record of the meeting) should be kept. The minutes should reflect the resolutions passed by the meeting. The resolutions should be along the lines shown below.

Most associations benefit from developing a structure and accordingly will often appoint a Chairperson/President, Treasurer and so on to be responsible for the different functions of the Committee. The Committee of Management (or the Board, whatever it may be called) should appoint officers at its first meeting.

Being a committee member is an important and responsible role. Members should always act honestly, exercising reasonable care and avoiding conflicts of interest. The Associations Act has codified the duties of office holders. An office holder includes committee members, staff and volunteers who make decisions that affect all or a substantial part of the business of the organisation or can significantly affect the financial *standing* of the organisation. Office holders have the following legal duties:

- not to make improper use of information acquired by virtue of holding their office (that is to secure personal advantage, the advantage of others or to the detriment of the association);
- to *discharge* their duties with care and diligence; and
- to exercise their powers in good faith in the best interest of the association, and for a proper purpose.

A committee member must disclose any “material personal interest” (something that can have a significant impact on a matter the association is discussing) to the committee as soon as they become aware of it and the nature and extent of the interest must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The nature and extent of the interest must also be disclosed at the next general meeting of the association. A committee member with a *material* personal interest in a matter must not be present while the matter is discussed at the committee meeting, or vote on the matter. (See also “Penalties”, below.)

The Committee will also need to consider whether insurance should be taken out to protect the interests of the association. The Associations Act now requires that associations indemnify each of their office holders against any *liability* that they occur in good faith in the performance of their duties. While the Associations Act does not *require* your association to take out insurance, it is useful to consider whether insurance may be useful to manage this, and other, risks.

Making the application

The application for incorporation is made online via the Consumer Affairs website, this online application will also create a myCAV account that will allow you to save your application, submit future annual statements and update your details all in one place.

Please go to the link below to activate your account and submit your application and payment.

<https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/clubs-and-fundraising/incorporated-associations/become-an-incorporated-association/register-as-an-incorporated-association/application>

As at 1 July 2017, the cost of applying for incorporation is between \$35.60 and \$206.20 – the cost depends on whether the Model Rules are adopted and whether the entity is a company, co-operative or society. The Registrar may refuse to incorporate an association when the type of group appears not to be appropriate as an association.

Naming your association

An association must not have, in the opinion of the Registrar, an undesirable name. While “undesirable” is not further defined, common sense would dictate against obviously offensive names.

The name and the registered number of the association must appear on all business documents including letterheads, notices, advertisements and publications. Once an association is incorporated, it must add the word “Incorporated” or “Inc.” to the end of its name.

An association can change its name by special resolution and by also seeking the approval of the Registrar. The change of name does not change the legal identity of the association, nor does it alter its rights or obligations in law.

Upon incorporation

The Registrar must send a *Certificate of Incorporation* that sets out the name of the association and the date of incorporation. Currently this takes approximately two to three weeks. An association must have a registered address, which can be the address of the Secretary.

Penalties

Committee members, especially the Secretary, should be aware that the Associations Act prescribes various penalties for non-performance of the Act’s requirements. Officers should make themselves aware of their responsibilities and ensure that they are carried out; this satisfies the officers’ duties to the association and the legislative regime.

Ending an association

Amalgamate an incorporated association

Two or more associations may amalgamate to form one association. To do this each of the associations wishing to amalgamate must pass a special resolution approving the terms of the amalgamation and the statement of purposes and rules of the proposed amalgamated association. In addition, the associations must each lodge with the Registrar a *Notice of Special Resolution Approving Amalgamation of Incorporated Associations*.

The application for amalgamation of the associations is made to the Registrar on an Application for Amalgamation of Incorporated Associations, which must be lodged by the Secretaries of the associations collectively. The application must include a copy of the statement of purposes and the rules of the proposed amalgamated association. As at 1 July 2013, the cost of

application for amalgamation is \$102.70 or \$186.20 depending on whether the Model Rules are used.

If the Registrar accepts the application for amalgamation a certificate of incorporation for the amalgamated association will be issued and the incorporation of the individual associations will be cancelled.

Upon amalgamation any property or *debts* of the individual associations becomes the property or debts of the amalgamated association.

Cancel or wind-up an incorporated association Voluntary cancellation

An association can apply to the Registrar for *voluntary* cancellation if it has assets under \$10,000. The association can apply for voluntary cancellation if it has ceased to operate, has no outstanding *debts* or liabilities and there are no current or proposed legal proceedings against it.

Voluntary wind-up

An association may voluntarily wind-up by special resolution. The association must pass a special resolution to wind-up and confirm the distribution of surplus assets (the amounts left after paying all *debts* and liabilities and the cost of winding-up).

Associations are generally prevented from distributing surplus assets to members or former members on winding-up. Existing associations with Rules approved before 8 April 2009 that provide for the distribution of surplus assets to members will not be subjected to this change.

If the association's assets are \$10,000 or less, it must lodge with the Registrar an Application for Cancellation of Incorporation together with minutes of the meeting passing the special resolution and proof of distribution of assets.

If the association has more than \$10,000 in assets, it must appoint a registered liquidator. The association must also lodge with the Registrar the following forms: Notice of resolution (form 205), Notice of appointment or cessation of an external administrator (form 505), Declaration of solvency (form 520), Notification of final meeting convened by liquidator (form 523) and Presentation of Accounts (form 524). These forms are available from the ASIC website at www.asic.gov.au.

Court wind-up of an association

Associations may be compulsorily ended by order of the Supreme Court where:

- the association has, by special resolution, resolved that it be wound up by the court;
- the association suspends its operations for a year;
- the association is unable to pay its debts;
- the association (or the association as trustee) has traded or divided profits among its members (subject to exceptions contained in the Associations Act);
- the association has acted outside its Statement of Purposes; or
- the court believes it is just or equitable to do so.

An application for winding-up can be made by the association, the Registrar or a member or *creditor* of the association. The general provisions, so far as they are relevant, relating to corporations that wind-up voluntarily or involuntarily also apply to associations.

Alternatively, a small association that has less than \$10,000 in assets, no outstanding *debts* or liabilities, lodged all annual statements and paid all required fees and is not a party to any legal proceedings can apply to the Registrar for *voluntary* cancellation of its incorporation.



VMSA RESOURCE SHEET

OPERATION OF AN INCORPORATED ASSOCIATION

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by board on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

Please note that this resource sheet is for guidance only and is an outline of the requirements to comply with the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012, as administered by the Department of Justice Victoria via Consumer Affairs Victoria.

The operations of an Incorporated Association are defined within the rules of the Association these may be the Standard Model Rules for an Incorporated Association obtained from Consumer Affairs, or they may be a customised version of the "Standard Model Rules for an Incorporated Association".

Reasons for having rules

Every incorporated association must have rules. The rules:

- are a written document
- guide how your association operates
- are a contract between the association and its members
- set out your association's purposes
- list the rights and responsibilities of members and office holders.

Members should know the rules. They have the right to inspect the rules and obtain a copy on request.

Statement of purposes

Since November 2012, an association's statement of purposes is no longer a separate statement, but is automatically included as part of its rules.

Associations with their own rules are not required to make changes to adapt to the new laws, but if an association does change its rules, it must include its statement of purposes in the proposed new rules.

Model rules versus own rules

Your association may use the model rules, or create its own rules. Either way, unless an existing association decides not to change its own rules, the rules must address every item listed in Schedule 1 of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* (the Act).

An association using its own rules can choose to do nothing. The relevant provisions of the model rules will be deemed to apply, to ensure the mandatory items listed in Schedule 1 of the Act are addressed. Alternatively, the association can expressly address those items by changing its rules.

Model rules

Using the model rules can save an association the time and expense of drafting its own rules.

There are three items that can be specified to suit an association's particular circumstances:

- the association's name
- its purposes and
- its financial year.

If an association changes any other items in the model rules, then the association has made its own rules.

Download a copy:

- [Model rules for an incorporated association - English \(Word, 198KB\)](#)
- [Model rules for an incorporated association - Arabic \(Word, 236KB\)](#)
- [Model rules for an incorporated association - Chinese \(Word, 214KB\)](#)
- [Model rules for an incorporated association - Vietnamese \(Word, 303KB\)](#)

Own rules

Your association may develop its own rules to suit its particular circumstances. For more information, view our [Own rules - incorporated associations page](#).

Changing the rules

To change its rules, your association can:

- notify us that it has passed a special resolution to approve adopting the model rules, or
- apply for approval to change its rules (after passing a special resolution) and we approve the request.

Your association must take the following steps to change its rules:

1. It proposes the change and notifies members at least 21 days before the upcoming general meeting. The existing rules should specify how this notice must be given (for example, by letter or verbally).

2. At the meeting, your association approves the changes through a special resolution. A special resolution will pass if:

- at least 75 per cent of the members who vote at the meeting (whether they vote in person or, if the rules allow, by proxy) vote in favour of the resolution to change the rules, and
- any further relevant requirements from the rules have been met.

For more information on special resolutions, view our [Meetings - incorporated associations page](#).

3. The secretary or approved delegate must lodge the new rules in myCAV within 28 days of the special resolution being passed. You must also provide:

- a copy of the notice of the special resolution stating the changes
- a copy of the rules with all paragraphs numbered, which clearly shows the changes, and
- payment of the fee. Payment can be made online using myCAV with either a debit or credit Visa or Mastercard, or in person with a cheque using Post Billpay at a Post Office. If you choose to pay using Post Billpay, we will send an invoice to your email address and you will have 14 days to make the payment.

For more information on using myCAV, view our [myCAV for incorporated associations section](#).

If you wish to change your association's financial year end date and it is contained within your association's rules:

- this is considered a change of rules, and
- you have to pass a special resolution.

For more information on how to change your financial year end date, view our [Update incorporated association details page](#).

FINANCIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS OF INCORPORATED ASSOCIATIONS

Step-by-step summary

The information below is a summary of the steps your incorporated association must take in order to submit its annual statement to Consumer Affairs Victoria properly.

Before the annual general meeting – prepare financial statements

The annual general meeting is a meeting of all the members of an incorporated association and must be held each year. It is a part of the financial reporting cycle and financial statements must be prepared in readiness for it.

Step 1: Prepare financial statements based on your association's financial records from the past financial year; you may have to prepare additional statements based on your association's tier level.

Step 2: The committee considers the financial statements; two committee members certify that the statements provide a 'true and fair' view of the association's financial performance and position.

For more information, view our [Financial statements and auditing requirements - incorporated associations page](#).

At the annual general meeting – present financial statements to members

Step 3: The committee presents the financial statements (with the certificate signed by two committee members) to members at the annual general meeting (which must be held within five months of the end of your association's financial year). If applicable, a review or audit report must also be presented. The annual general meeting minutes must include a copy of each of these documents.

Step 4: Immediately following the annual general meeting, a committee member must certify that they attended the annual general meeting and that the financial statements were presented to members.

For more information, view our [Financial statements and auditing requirements - incorporated associations page](#).

After the annual general meeting – lodge the annual statement

Step 5: Annual statements must be lodged online using your myCAV account within one month of your annual general meeting. Lodgement can be made by either the secretary or an authorised delegate of the association.

For more information, view our [Lodging an annual statement - incorporated associations page](#).

Related information

- [Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012](#)
- [Associations Incorporation Reform Regulations 2012](#)

UPDATE INCORPORATED ASSOCIATION DETAILS

Check current details

Via myCAV

You can check your current details by signing into your myCAV account:

1. Open the [myCAV sign in page](#)
2. Once you are in the myCAV sign in page, enter your email address and password in the sign in form on the page, then click the 'sign-in' button. This will open your myCAV account page.
3. Once you are in your myCAV account page, you will see your incorporated association(s) name. Click the name - this will reveal your association's details.

Via the public register

View our [Search for an incorporated association page](#).

How to update details

1. Open the [myCAV sign in page](#)
2. Once you are in the myCAV sign in page, enter your email address and password in the sign in form on the page, then click the 'sign-in' button. This will open your myCAV account page.
3. Once you are in your myCAV account page, you will see your incorporated association(s) name. Click the name - this will reveal your association's details, and the list of 'Actions', i.e. links to change the details.
4. Click a link under 'Actions', e.g. 'Change address'. This will open a form for you to update the details.

When to update details

You must advise us of any changes to your incorporated association's details on the public register of incorporated associations in Victoria, including:

- appointing a secretary
- changing secretary address or email address
- changing registered address of incorporated association
- changing name of incorporated association
- changing financial year end date
- changing rules (for more information on rules, view our [Incorporated association rules page](#))
- adopting model rules (for more information on rules, view our [Incorporated association rules page](#)).

Note: Please notify us of changes to your association's name or rules within 28 days. For all other changes, notify us within 14 days. Please refer to [How to update details](#) above.

If you have made a change but have not notified us within the required timeframes, please do so as soon as possible.

Keep your association's details up to date; otherwise, it may miss important notifications from us.

Transfer incorporated association to company limited by guarantee

You must also advise us if your incorporated association transfers its registration to become a company limited by guarantee, within 14 days of the transfer occurring.

Your association must first approve the transfer, and any associated change of name, by passing a special resolution at a general meeting. You must submit to us:

- a copy of the meeting minutes showing the resolutions
- a copy of the company's certificate of registration with the Australian Securities and Investment Commission
- any outstanding association annual statements.

Submitting the correct documents will ensure that your organisation:

- is no longer subject to the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*, and
- will be removed from the public register of incorporated associations.

Annual statement

Your association must lodge an annual statement with us every year within one month after its annual general meeting. For more information, view our [Annual statement - incorporated associations section](#).

Related information

- [Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012](#)
- [Associations Incorporation Reform Regulations 2012](#)

SECRETARY, COMMITTEE, OFFICE HOLDERS, AND DELEGATES

Role of the secretary

From 15 April 2015, secretaries of incorporated associations must have an online myCAV account to lodge annual statements and undertake all transactions and notifications of change.

For more information on myCAV, view our [myCAV for incorporated associations section](#).

In an incorporated association, the role of secretary includes:

- lodging an annual statement with us within a month after the annual general meeting
- applying to us to change the association's name or rules
- notifying us of:
 - a change to the association's registered address
 - their appointment as secretary or any changes to their details
 - a special resolution to wind up the association or distribute its assets
- dealing with requests to restrict access to information in the association's register of members
- adding or removing delegates of the association. For more information, view our [Delegates of incorporated associations page](#).

The secretary's role may differ according to the association's rules. The rules may allow the secretary to hold any other office within the association.

The secretary must:

- agree to be named or appointed secretary
- be at least 18 years old
- live in Australia.

First secretary

When your association first incorporates, the person who lodges the application is deemed to be the secretary, unless the application states another person as the secretary.

If the association states another person is the secretary, the person who lodged the application becomes a delegate of the association and will need to create their own [myCAV account](#).

The first secretary does not have to separately notify us of their appointment.

Changing the secretary's contact details

To update the secretary's contact details, a secretary or delegate of an association must sign into their [myCAV account](#).

Your email address and the password you create are used to verify your identity each time you sign into myCAV.

In order to maintain strict security levels, to make a change to your email address, please email cav.registration@justice.vic.gov.au

Changing the secretary

If a secretary leaves, your association must fill the vacancy within 14 days, using the process specified in its rules.

If it is not practical to appoint a new secretary within 14 days, the association's committee must appoint a person to temporarily fill the role until an official secretary is elected or appointed.

A newly appointed secretary will need to create their own [myCAV account](#).

The new secretary must update the secretary contact details recorded in myCAV, on taking up the position. Departing secretaries will no longer have access to myCAV. Only the current secretary can change the secretary on myCAV.

Related information

- [Update incorporated association details](#)

ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The committee (sometimes referred to as the 'management committee' or 'board') looks after the association's affairs and has legal duties under the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* (the Act).

Committee members are appointed according to your association's rules. Depending on the rules, their duties may include:

- maintaining the association's financial viability
- ensuring the association's purposes are being achieved
- keeping up to date with legal requirements
- signing contracts on the association's behalf.

Specifically, committee members' functions under the Act include:

- ensuring an annual general meeting is held within five months after the end of the association's financial year
- submitting a financial statement that covers the full financial year, which gives a 'true and fair' view of the association's financial affairs, to members at the annual general meeting
- overseeing the association's financial affairs. This includes making sure the association does not continue to operate if it is insolvent
- appointing a new secretary within 14 days, if the position becomes vacant
- returning all documents that belong to the association within 28 days of ceasing to be a committee member.

First committee

Unless the rules state otherwise, the first committee members of a newly incorporated association are the same people who were committee members before incorporation.

Material personal interest

A committee member must disclose any 'material personal interest' to the committee as soon as they are aware of this interest. A material personal interest is something that can have a significant impact on a matter the association is discussing.

All members must be advised of the nature and extent of this interest at the next general meeting.

The details of the interest must be recorded in the committee meeting minutes.

The committee member cannot:

- be present while the matter is discussed at the committee meeting, and
- vote on this matter.

The above does not apply if the:

- interest exists only because the person is employed by the association, or
- association was established to benefit members in the same membership class, or
- person shares this interest with all, or most, of the association's members.

Insolvent trading

The committee is responsible for overseeing the financial affairs (and financial health) of the association.

If an association is trading while insolvent, it means it is continuing to operate and enter into contracts or incur debts it cannot repay.

A committee member must ensure the association does not trade if it is insolvent.

Documents and contracts

Your association may authenticate its documents under its common seal (if it has one) or with the secretary's signature.

Your association may, subject to its rules, execute contracts or other documents if these are signed by:

- two committee members, or
- a committee member and the secretary (if the secretary is not a committee member).

When a secretary or committee member leaves office

A committee member or secretary must retire and leave office in accordance with the rules.

In addition, a committee member or secretary vacates office if they:

- resign (a written resignation must be given to the committee)
- are removed via a special resolution
- declare bankruptcy
- become a represented person within the meaning of the *Guardianship and Administration Act 1986* (includes somebody who has suffered a severe injury or illness and can no longer look after their own interests)
- move overseas (in the case of a secretary), or
- get replaced by a statutory manager to conduct the association's affairs.

A person is not eligible to hold office as a member of the committee of an incorporated association, if they have been disqualified from holding office as the director:

- of a company under the *Corporations Act 2001*;
- of an Indigenous corporation under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006*; or
- under the Co-operatives National Law.

If they are currently a committee member, they must vacate office immediately under section 78 of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*.

An association's rules may include other reasons a person may leave office.

When a secretary or committee member leaves office, they must be replaced in accordance with the rules. For more information, view the [Changing the secretary section of our Secretary - incorporated associations page](#).

ROLE OF OFFICE HOLDERS

An office holder of an incorporated association refers to:

- a committee member
- the secretary
- a person, including an association employee, who takes part in making decisions that affect all or a large part of the association's operations (generally, this will only be senior employees, for example, where an association has a chief executive officer or chief financial officer)
- a person involved in the association's management, who can significantly affect the association's financial standing
- a person whose instructions or wishes the committee is used to following; this does not include a person giving professional advice (for example, a religious order may have an incorporated association, but the members, who all belong to the order, follow the direction of the head of the order).

Office holders have certain legal duties. These duties are based upon, and are broadly equivalent to, the duties of a director, as set out in the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth). An office holder must:

- carry out their duties with care and diligence
- carry out their duties in good faith in the best interests of the association, and for a proper purpose (not, for example, their own profit)
- not use information acquired through their position for personal advantage, the advantage of others, or to the detriment of the association.

If an office holder makes a business decision relating to the operation of the association, they must, among other things:

- make that decision in the best interests of the association
- not have a personal interest in the decision.

Using information

An office holder may sometimes make a decision affecting the association based on information or advice they receive from other people. These other people may include employees of the association, fellow office holders or professional advisors (such as lawyers or accountants).

The law protects office holders if, in the circumstances, it was reasonable for them to rely on this information or advice and they did so in good faith.

Protection for office holders

Your association must indemnify its office holders from liability for activities they undertake on behalf of the association in good faith. This will protect these individuals (although not where they have deliberately broken the law).

For example, if an office holder is sued for something they have done on behalf of the association and must pay damages, the association must indemnify the office holder. That is, the association will be responsible for paying damages.

The association must provide the indemnity from its assets – the government does not fund this indemnity. Large associations that handle contracts or agreements of significant value may consider taking out officers' indemnity insurance.

If an office holder does the wrong thing

An office holder may face:

- **criminal action** if they:
 - misuse their position for personal advantage
 - deliberately allow the association to trade if it is insolvent
- **civil action** of up to \$20,000 if they:
 - misuse information or their position
 - breach their duties of:
 - care and diligence
 - good faith and proper purpose.

Related information

- [Corporations Act 2001 \(Cth\)](#)

DELEGATES OF INCORPORATED ASSOCIATIONS

Role

The role of a delegate is to help the secretary meet the association's obligations under the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*.

A delegate may be the association's accountant or solicitor, or someone who can help the secretary meet the association's administrative responsibilities.

An authorised delegate may:

- lodge an application to incorporate an association
- lodge an annual return
- change the association's name
- change the association's rules
- change the association's contact details
- change the secretary's contact details
- change their own contact details
- add delegates (when there are fewer than three existing delegates)
- remove other delegates.

Authorisation

Delegates must be authorised by the incorporated association's secretary.

Even when a delegate is authorised to help the secretary, the secretary remains responsible for compliance with the law. For more information, view our [Running an incorporated association section](#).

The person lodging the application must be authorised to do so by the majority of the association's members.

If that person is not the secretary, they will become a delegate of the association automatically in our myCAV system. myCAV is our new online system, which lets you apply to register as an incorporated association, update association details, and lodge annual statements -- all in the one place. There is no fee to create an account.

To create a myCAV account and to lodge an application to incorporate your association, view our [Register as an incorporated association page](#).

Maximum number of delegates

An association may have up to three delegates. If an association has three delegates and an additional delegate is authorised, the secretary must remove one of the existing delegates from myCAV. The outgoing delegate will no longer have access to the association's transactions.

Changing delegates

When a change of delegate is made in myCAV, an email will be sent to the secretary of the association and the delegate, to advise of the change.

It is best practice to record any changes of secretary or delegate in the minutes of the association and keep a written record.

To create a myCAV account, lodge an application to incorporate your association, or change delegates, view our [Register as an incorporated association page](#).

Related information

- [Update incorporated association details](#)
- [Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012](#)
- [Associations Incorporation Reform Regulations 2012](#)

MEETINGS – INCORPORATED ASSOCIATIONS

Types of meetings

General meetings

A general meeting is one that takes place in accordance with the rules. It includes both annual general meetings and special general meetings.

Your association may hold a general meeting if each member who is entitled to vote has been notified of the date, time and place, as specified in the rules.

If your association's rules provide for voting by proxy using a standard form, members must be given a copy of that form with the notice.

Annual general meeting (AGM)

An annual general meeting is a meeting of all the members of an incorporated association which must be held once during each calendar year.

The annual general meeting must be convened in accordance with law, using the procedures in the organisation's rules. For more information on rules, view our [Incorporated association rules section](#).

Procedures for carrying out an annual general meeting of an incorporated association vary between organisations; however the law sets out mandatory minimum rules for giving of notice and conducting an annual general meeting.

An association must hold its first annual general meeting within 18 months of becoming incorporated and all subsequent annual general meetings must be held within five months after the end of the association's financial year.

The association must hold its annual general meeting after its financial year ends, to allow for the association's financial statements for that year to be presented to members.

Each association member who is entitled to vote must be:

- notified of the date, time and place of the general meeting in the manner specified in the association's rule, and
- given a proxy form, if the rules allow for proxy voting and there is a standard form.
- What happens at the annual general meeting?

At the annual general meeting, the association must present its members with the required financial statements (including additional statements or reports, depending on what tier the association is).

The members review the financial statements and decide whether to accept them as the association's financial statements for that financial year.

The committee must ensure the minutes of the annual general meeting include a copy of the:

- financial statements presented at the meeting
- certification from two committee members that the financial statements give a 'true and fair' view of the association's financial position and performance.

After the annual general meeting, a committee member must certify that they attended the annual general meeting and that the financial statements were presented.

Members must provide certification, which they can do on the annual statement form. For a copy of the form, view our [Annual statement - incorporated associations page](#).

Apply for an extension of time to hold an annual general meeting

If there are exceptional circumstances preventing your association from holding its annual general meeting by the due date, you can complete and lodge an [Application for extension of time to hold an annual general meeting or lodge financial statements \(Word, 147KB\)](#). Lodgement details are on the form.

Extensions of time are subject to approval from Consumer Affairs Victoria.

Special general meetings

General meetings (other than the annual general meeting) are called special general meetings and must have a specific purpose.

Special general meetings are often called to deal with business that cannot wait until the organisation's annual general meeting. A range of matters may be considered, including those that must be decided by a special resolution. For more information, view the [Special resolutions section on this page](#).

Your association may hold a special general meeting if each member who is entitled to vote has been notified of the date, time and place, as specified in the rules.

If your association's rules provide for voting by proxy using a standard form, members must be given a copy of that form with the notice.

Committee meetings

A committee is a group of members of the incorporated association who are chosen to make decisions on specific matters on behalf of it.

Committee meetings are usually less formal than general meetings and the notice requirements to attend are also less formal. However, it is important to comply with the rules of your association and to take and store accurate minutes from committee meetings.

For more information on rules, view our [Incorporated association rules section](#).

Attending and voting

Unless a member has been suspended under the rules, your association cannot stop them from:

- attending, or
- voting at a general meeting (if entitled).

You may use any technology to help conduct general meetings. For example:

- teleconference
- videoconference
- online video communication.

A member who takes part in a general meeting through the use of technology has the same rights as the members who are present at the meeting, including voting rights.

Special resolutions

A special resolution is a decision of particular importance made by the association.

Legally, an association can only make certain decisions by special resolution. This includes decisions to:

- change the association's name or rules
- amalgamate with another association
- Voluntarily wind up.

Your association's rules may also require that other decisions be approved via a special resolution.

All voting members must be given at least 21 days' notice of the proposed special resolution. The notice must state the:

- time, date and place where the meeting to vote on the special resolution will be held
- proposed resolution in full
- intention to propose the resolution as a special resolution.

A special resolution will be passed if:

- at least 75 per cent of members voting at the meeting (either in person or, if the rules of the association allow, by proxy) vote in its favour, and
- any further relevant requirements from the rules have been met.

Inspecting rules and minutes

If a member asks, the association must, at a reasonable time, let them inspect its rules and the minutes (these are a written record of discussions and decisions) of **general meetings**.

If a member makes a written request for a copy of the rules or minutes, the association must give them a copy within 14 days.

Your association may also let a member inspect the minutes of **committee meetings**, but only if its rules allow it. A member does not have a general legal right to inspect minutes of committee meetings.

Related information

- [Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012](#)
- [Associations Incorporation Reform Regulations 2012](#)

The above information has been collated, copied and pasted from numerous pages on the Victorian Consumer Affairs website, to ensure this information is current please refer to this site.

<https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/clubs-and-fundraising/incorporated-associations/running-an-incorporated-association>



VMsa RESOURCE SHEET

OPERATIONS OF AN AUSPICED GROUP

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by board on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

*Please note that this resource sheet is for guidance only and has been provided by **Not For Profit Law / Justice Connect** please click on the link for further detailed information on auspicing arrangements. Before entering into any agreement with any organisation, the VMsa recommends that you seek your own independent legal advice, to ensure you understand your requirements under these agreements.*

AUSPICING

It's important for an auspicing organisation to make sure that auspicing another organisation or project will not jeopardise tax concessions or DGR endorsement

What is auspicing?

To 'auspice' means to provide support, sponsorship or guidance. The group or individual requiring support is known as the 'auspicee' and the incorporated organisation that auspices the group or individual is known as the 'auspisor'. When using an auspice arrangement, the relationship is often described as one where the auspicee will be carrying out the project 'under the auspices of' the incorporated organisation – the auspisor. The auspisor receives funding or enters into relevant agreements for the auspicee.

Another way to think of an auspicing arrangement is that it is a bit like a sub-contracting arrangement: the auspisor enters into an agreement, and then sub-contracts their obligations under the agreement to the auspicee. However in reality, normally the auspicee would approach the auspisor, and the auspisor may even charge a fee for auspicing the auspicee.

An auspice agreement is a legally binding contract. It sets out the legal obligations of both the auspisor and auspicee toward each other and in relation to any specific funding or other agreements.

For detailed information on auspicing, see the link the Auspicing Guide below on this page.

When is an auspice agreement used?

Auspice agreements are often used to help certain community organisations to access funding for their activities.

Some common auspicing arrangements include:

- auspicing of one-off events such as art exhibitions, concerts, fairs or festivals by arts organisations
- auspicing of pilot projects or program trials
- auspicing to incubate start-up groups
- auspicing of local playgroups and study groups by a larger organisation
- auspicing of youth projects, and
- auspicing of sporting programs or competitions.

The most common reason for a group or individual to seek to be auspiced is a need to quickly and easily meet grant funding requirements. Grant funding often requires that a recipient is incorporated, is a Tax Concession Charity or has DGR endorsement.

While it is possible for a group seeking to run a project to become incorporated and then make applications to access tax concessions and DGR endorsement, this can be a time consuming and expensive process. Where a group or individual only wants to run a short term project, or is exploring a model and wishing to trial an idea before committing to incorporation, auspicings offers a neat solution.

Completing a project under the auspices of the auspicings organisation provides quick access to tax concessions and DGR status. Sometimes groups that have already incorporated may also seek to be auspicings. An example is where the funding body wants to see the project group establish a reputation of successful implementation of projects before providing direct funding to the group. Another reason could be that the incorporated group is yet to receive the appropriate tax endorsements required for the funding or activities. In that circumstance, the auspicing agreement would reflect that the group is operating through a legal entity.

In general, before agreeing to auspicings another organisation, the auspicings, should:

- ensure they are satisfied that the project or activities for which the funding is sought for the auspicee, furthers the mission of your organisation in some way, and
- check their constituent documents (constitution, rules, by-laws) to ensure that entering into the auspicings agreement is consistent with the objects and powers of your organisation.

The Auspicings Guide

The Auspicings Guide provides a detailed overview of auspicings arrangements, important issues for parties involved to consider, and guidance on reaching agreement on the terms of the auspicings agreement. The Guide addresses the following issues:

- what is auspicings and when is auspicings appropriate?
- the pros and cons of auspicings arrangements for both auspicings and auspicees
- issues to consider prior to negotiating an auspicings agreement and coming to an agreement, and
- what to do when things go wrong.

For a copy of The Auspicings Guide go to the link on the Not-for-profit law website below https://www.nfplaw.org.au/sites/default/files/media/Auspicing_Guide.pdf

At the end of the Guide is a checklist, which can also be downloaded separately.

Not for Profit Law or Justice Connect have many valuable resources available on their website their website can be found at <http://www.nfplaw.org.au/>, and click on the Resources TAB.



VMSA RESOURCE SHEET

WORKING WITH AN AUSPICING BODY

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by board on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

What is auspicings?

To 'auspice' means to provide support, sponsorship or guidance. The group or individual requiring support is known as the 'auspicee' and the incorporated organisation that auspices the group or individual is known as the 'auspisor'. When using an auspice arrangement, the relationship is often described as one where the auspicee will be carrying out the project 'under the auspices of' the incorporated organisation – the auspisor. The auspisor receives funding or enters into relevant agreements for the auspicee.

Another way to think of an auspicings arrangement is that it is a bit like a sub-contracting arrangement: the auspisor enters into an agreement, and then sub-contracts their obligations under the agreement to the auspicee. However in reality, normally the auspicee would approach the auspisor, and the auspisor may even charge a fee for auspicings the auspicee.

An auspice agreement is a legally binding contract. It sets out the legal obligations of both the auspisor and auspicee toward each other and in relation to any specific funding or other agreements.

For further details on auspicings, please refer to <https://www.nfplaw.org.au/auspicings>

How does this work for Men's Shed?

In many instances, this works very well for Men's Sheds, as there is a Memorandum of Understanding outlining the roles and responsibilities of both parties, including the Governance requirements for the shed.

This MOU can include

- Management responsibilities for both parties
- The employment or provision of a co-ordinator or mentor for the group
- The ownership of the tools and equipment
- The ownership of finances – who owns the money, and who can sign cheques.
- Insurance coverage requirements
- Reporting requirements – to the group, council State or Federal Government subject to funding requirements
- Coverage of expenses to operate the shed
- Lease or Licencing arrangements for the building
- Payment of bills such as electricity, water, rubbish services

As an organisation that is Auspicings another group, the main body is taking on the legal identity for the group, and is providing the support, assistance and guidance for this group to operate. This may also include providing access to a building and the services connected to it. A simple version is they are providing a Parental Guarantee to a child. If the child mucks up, misses a payment, the Auspicings body is responsible,

Your auspicing body has put a lot of effort, in both time and resources, into making your shed successful. Many auspicing bodies have financially assisted Men's Shed groups in getting the shed to where it is today. This includes locating funding sources, writing funding submissions grants for the building, tools and materials, and may have arranged/assisted in the building of, or renovation of the actual shed, providing tools, equipment and training, providing promotional items, polo shirts, caps, banners, marquees etc.

As a group being auspiced, you relied on you auspice to provide many of the things for your shed to operate. These included:

- The building and facilities – the shed, the meeting rooms, the toilets the kitchen
- The tools and equipment that you utilise to do your activities
- The cost of the bills for your insurance, the cost of your outings, your bus hire and fuel, the cost or electricity, gas, water, phone and internet.
- The management of your finances and the governance of the group, the making sure that your needs were covered.

Whilst you may not be happy with the way they have done, or do things, are you capable of replicating what they do? Do you have the knowledge, the resources and the financial capacity to take this on?

Moving away from an auspicing body it like a teenager leaving home, or an apprentice going out on their own.

It can be a great experience, a huge learning curve, you may receive a lot of help and assistance to reach your goal, or you may be hindered every step of the way.

What if we do not have a Memorandum of Understanding?

If you do not have a MOU in place, it is more than likely that your group is a direct programme or group activity that was set up by your owning body, and was not a group that approached the body with an idea asking to be auspiced.

In this scenario your shed is not a legal entity, and cannot own anything, take out contracts or have a bank account. All the tools, equipment, materials, manuals, designs, etc. are the property of the Auspicing Body.

As a group that has no legal identity any donations of tools, equipment or materials are in fact donations made to the Auspicing body to assist them with operating their Mens shed programme.

So how do we have control of our own destiny?

In the above set up, without a MOU, your group has no say in how you operate. To take this control will require your Auspicing Body to allow the group to take control, either by putting in place a MOU, setting up a sub-committee of the Auspice Organisation or by assisting the group to become an Incorporated Association.

So what happens with the tools, equipment and materials that are in the shed?

As previously stated, unless you have a MOU in place, that states how that the tools, equipment and materials that are handled, that is they become the property of the Auspicing body or the shed, then they remain the property of the Auspicing body.

If circumstances have changed and the group feels that they have the knowledge required to become their own Incorporated Association, talk with your Auspicing Body, let them know that you want greater control and that you want to become an Incorporated association and look after your own affairs.

Talk to them about the ownership of the tools, the materials etc, and see if they will agree to donate / transfer ownership to the new Incorporated Association.

Remember that even though the group may have raised funds through BBQ's or making tables, chairs, possum boxes, you made these as a group operating under the Auspicing Body. The Auspicing body is the legal entity, not the shed.

There are many interpretation that are made, on whose funds, tools, etc are whose, but the simple fact is if the shed is not Incorporated, they are not a legal entity, and as such cannot own anything, or operate a bank account.



VMSSA RESOURCE SHEET

INDUCTION MANUAL SAMPLE

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by board on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

ABCD MENS SHED INC

INDUCTION MANUAL

FOR INCORPORATED SHEDS

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HISTORY OF THE ABCD MEN'S SHED

The ABCD Men's Shed was formed by five blokes who were looking for a place for men to meet in a safe and friendly environment where they could meet with other men, socialise have some fun, pass on skills, learn new skills, and reduce the social isolation and loneliness that they endured through retirement from full time employment.

The five blokes talked to retired men, and found that others faced the same issue. The group then held a community information day that was well attended by other retirees and it was agreed that there was community support for the establishment of a Men's Shed in the community.

After month of discussions with various community groups and the local council, the building we are in today became available via a licence for 5 years from the local council.

This initial lease has subsequently renewed for a further 5-year period, and through the fundraising efforts of our members, and through a number of different grants, we now have the facility we are in today.

The licence renewal for the site is due on 1st July 2022.

Our licence cost whilst minimal, provides for the building only, the ABCD Men's Shed still need to cover the costs of services such as electricity, gas, telephone, internet and insurance and waste collection.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE OF THE ABCD MEN'S SHED

The ABCD Men's Shed is a voluntary, community-based, not for profit organisation that is accessible to all men living in the surrounding area.

Our primary objective is to advance the health and well-being of our members and to encourage social inclusion and the prevention of social isolation.

We achieve this via the provision of a safe, friendly and welcoming facility where men are able to participate in meaningful projects and activities at their own pace, in a relaxed environment and in the company of other men.

MANAGEMENT OF THE ABCD MEN'S SHED

The ABCD Men's Shed is an Incorporated Association registered with Consumer Affairs and operating under Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012,

The committee of management are elected by the members of the Association annually and include the following roles:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Committee Members /Ordinary Members – Currently set at 5

THE ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

The role of the Committee of Management is to manage the business of the ABCD Men's Shed, to ensure it complies with:-

- The obligations under the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012
- The obligations under the Taxation Act
- The obligations under Occupational Health and Safety requirements / Duty of Care requirements
- The obligations of meeting its Statement of Purpose
- Ensuring that the shed is financially viable and able to conduct its business and pay its accounts
- The expectations of its members

CURRENT MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

The committee of Management are elected representatives of the ABCD Men's Shed and are elected at our Annual General Meeting. This meeting is held during the month of XXXX.

The purpose of our Annual General Meeting is to report of the activities conducted by the shed, to report and pass the financial reports, review, amend or alter the annual membership fees, the daily attendance charges, and to elect new office bearers as required.

The Current members of the Committee are:

President

Vice President

Secretary

Treasurer

Committee

Committee

Committee

Committee

Committee

Shed Co-ordinator

Workshop manager

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

There are a number of financial obligations that the ABCD Men's Shed may need to meet and these include:

- The building licence fee
- Insurance requirements
- Essential services such as Electricity, Gas, Water
- Waste collection services
- Telephone and Internet connections
- Post Office Box Rental
- Web site hosting
- Insurance – building, contents, public liability, volunteers insurance
- Accountant / Auditor / Book keeper costs
- Tea, Coffee, biscuits
- Cleaning supplies
- Test and Tag costs
- Equipment maintenance and repairs

There are a number of costs incurred in running a Men's Shed and these can be in the range of \$8,000 - \$10,000 per annum.

When these costs exceed the income from membership and daily attendance fees, the shed needs to look at what fundraising efforts it can undertake to meet this shortfall.

These may include running catering services such as BBQ's or assisting with Gate keeping or car parking for other organisation, or producing goods that can be on sold.

Where possible the management of ABCD Men's Shed would expect that the members would assist in these fundraising efforts.

CONDUCT

- In order to comply with OH&S, Insurance, and our licence requirements, all members and visitors attending the ABCD Men's Shed are to sign the attendance register on arrival and departure from the shed, and members are to display their nametag whilst in the shed.
- All people attending the ABCD Men's Shed are subject to these rules and regulations.
- All members attending the ABCD Men's Shed are to behave in a sensible non-threatening manner to all others attending the ABCD Men's Shed, and appreciate and respect the values and beliefs of the other members and visitors attending the shed.
- All members attending ABCD Men's Shed are to behave in a manner that does not bring the name of ABCD Men's Shed into disrepute.
- All activities undertaken in the shed are to comply with OH&S safety regulations including any rules relating to the use of specific equipment.

Where required please ensure:

- Equipment, bench tops work areas and floors are kept clean and tidy at all times
- Tools and equipment are returned to their correct locations immediately after use
- Rubbish bins are emptied at the end of each session.
- Report any incidence of issues with the shed, work spaces, machines and tool to the shed co-ordinator or a member of the Committee of Management.

DRESS STANDARDS

- All members attending ABCD Men's Shed are to wear appropriate PPE protection as required
- Members working with any of the machinery or equipment must be in enclosed footwear
- No offensive clothing is permitted

MEMBERSHIP OF THE ABCD MEN'S SHED

- Membership of the ABCD Men's Shed is open to men over the age of 18. Whilst the primary purpose of the ABCD Men's Shed is the advancement of the health and well-being of the men.
- The current annual membership fee for the ABCD Men's Shed is \$55.00 per annum, plus an additional daily fee of \$2.00 to assist with the covering of the outgoing expenses of the shed.
- Any adjustment to these fees are moved as a motion at our Annual General Meeting and if the motion were passed, they would commence from the new financial year.
- Completed Membership Applications must be submitted to the Secretary and will be tabled for business at the next Committee of Management meeting.
- The Committee reserves the right to approve or decline a membership application.
- The Committee or its representative may investigate a breach of the constitutional rules or policies and procedures of the shed by a member of the shed.
- The Committee may suspend or terminate the membership of a member as per the rules of the sheds constitution.

BREACHES TO THE RULES

Minor offences are identified as being instances of:

- Swearing
- Unacceptable language
- Unacceptable behaviour
- Lapse in temper control
- Not following the instructions of a committee member or shed co-ordinator

Major Offences are identified as being incidents involving:

- Repeated minor offences
- Breaches of Safety regulations
- Breaches of the drug and alcohol policy
- Bringing the good name of ABCD Men's Shed into disrepute
- Instances of violent behaviour or assault
- Continual disruption of the harmony and well-being of other members
- Property damage
- Illegal or unlawful behaviour

DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY

- No illegal drugs or alcohol are to be consumed in or near the ABCD Men's Shed during opening hours.
- No person under the influence of any illegal drugs or alcohol is permitted to attend the ABCD Men's Shed.
- At the discretion of the Committee of Management, alcohol may be permitted at social events.
- If alcohol is permitted at a social event, no machinery or tools are to be used during this event.
- The Committee of Management reserves the right to prevent a member from operating any equipment if it appears that that member's capacity to do so is impaired by legal / illegal drugs or alcohol.

SMOKING POLICY

- The ABCD Men's Shed has designated non-smoking area's
- Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking area
- All cigarette butts are to be disposed of in the proper receptacle

REFRESHMENTS

- Coffee, tea and soft drinks will be available for members for a small charge (gold coin donation)

TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT POLICY

- All tools owned by ABCD Men's Shed are to be recorded in the property / asset / equipment register
- All tools on loan to ABCD Men's Shed are to be recorded in the equipment on loan register
- All tools owned, or on loan to ABCD Men's Shed are to be electrically safety tested and tagged
- No tools or equipment can be borrowed from the ABCD Men's Shed unless authorised and recorded in the loans book, including any tools going of site for repair.
- All members attending the ABCD Men's Shed are to be assessed as competent to operate, or use the tools in the ABCD Men's Shed.
- All tools and equipment that are donated to the ABCD Men's Shed remain the property of the ABCD Men's Shed and the disposition of these tools is to be recorded in the appropriate register,

PRIVACY COMMITMENT

During the course of its activities, the shed may collect, hold and use personal information about members and prospective members. Personal information is information or an opinion about an individual whose identity is apparent or can be reasonably be ascertained from the information or opinion.

Any information obtained must be managed in a professional and ethical manner. The shed shall comply with all relevant laws pertaining to the collection and keeping of private information.

If the records contain information of a personal nature, that information is not to be used for any other purpose or disclosed outside the Shed without the express permission of the member concerned.

All members must therefore observe the following guidelines:

- Personal information is only to be collected if it is necessary for Shed business activities and only by lawful and fair means.
- You must communicate who you are, how you collect information and what you will do with it.
- Use and disclose personal information only as advised to, or as consented to, by the individual.
- Ensure the quality of the data is accurate, complete and up-to-date.
- Protect personal information received, and de-identify it where necessary.
- Allow individuals to access and change their personal information.
- Do not collect sensitive information.

All members of the Shed must abide with the Shed policy on privacy/personal information collection.

Our expectations

- ✓ Remember we're here to **HAVE FUN**
- ✓ So don't worry and be happy
- ✓ Use our tools but don't BE A TOOL
- ✓ no words in anger, be nice, tolerant & treat each other with respect
- ✓ make visitors & new members feel welcome
- ✓ be helpful in and outside the shed
- ✓ bring solutions, not problems
- ✓ share your knowledge, skills and experience
- ✓ if you are feeling unwell or depressed, tell someone
- ✓ no smoking in the building only in designated smoking area
- ✓ no illicit drugs or alcohol, so if affected stay home
- ✓ be safe, act safely & look out for each other
- ✓ no fewer than two people in shed when in workshop
- ✓ wash your cutlery, crockery & clean-up kitchen spills
- ✓ wipe down basins in bathrooms after use
- ✓ report any hazards, accidents, injuries, incidents or near misses
- ✓ no tool or machine use without instruction / authorisation
- ✓ closed shoes and safety glasses must be worn in workshops
- ✓ other PPE to be used as per machine instructions
- ✓ if you don't know how to do something, please ask for help
- ✓ use a job sheet for EVERY project, so cost can be agreed before starting
- ✓ if you use a tool, hardware or accessory, put it back where you found it
- ✓ if you make a mess, clean it up
- ✓ clear off work benches at the end of the day
- ✓ label projects / work pieces & put them away for next time
- ✓ if something breaks or appears faulty, tell someone
- ✓ if we're running low on something, order it, don't wait 'till we run out
- ✓ if you need reimbursement for something, provide a receipt
- ✓ parking only in designated areas



VMSA RESOURCE SHEET

STRATEGIC PLAN

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by board on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

Strategic Plan

20XX to 20XX

Developed on: ??

Endorsed on: ??

Reviewed on: ??

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Background

The Men's Shed

This is your shed's story so far, doesn't have to be detailed. The ?? Men's Shed was established in, are there any milestones worth mentioning? Is it incorporated / auspice?

As at the 20?? AGM the Committee of Management was:

- President:
- Secretary:
- Treasurer:
- General Committee:

As of ?? 20?? the Men's Shed has ?? members and ?? potential members.

The Men's Shed is located at ???

Community Profile

Find information: <http://profile.id.com.au/> - Where possible show %. Check your local council website. You can make this as detailed as you want. Below are some of the headings that you could highlight, the data for each heading can be sourced from the census data and found on the website above.

Population

How many people are living in your council area? How many people are living in your community? Is this growing/ decreasing? Is this growing faster than the Regional Victoria or Victoria Averages? Look at the Estimated Population for that year as well as the one recorded in the last census.

Age

What is the average age of your community? Is there a higher level of one age group compared to Regional Victoria and Victoria averages? Is this changing?

Family Structure

Does your community profile shoe a lot of families? A lot of couples without children living at home? A lot of single parent families?

Settlement

Is there a high level of new people coming to your community? Retirees? Refugees?

Socio-economic disadvantage

Is there a high/low level of disadvantage in your community? Look at SEIFA and Dropping off the Edge profiles for your local area. How has this changed over time?

Employment and Education

What are the most recent unemployment rates for your community? Is this higher or lower than the average? Has this changed recently? What are the education attainment rates for your area?

Disability

What is the proportion of population aged 0-64 years with a disability (??%) compared to the state average (??%). What is the proportion of people requiring assistance with day to day activities?

Income

What is the median income figures compared to the rest of Victorian averages. Are there a high proportion of people on lower incomes?

Other

Are there any other interesting and unique facts about your community? What are the needs of men in your area? What other local facilities/services are available to meet those needs?

Note: Depending on the size of your shed group, you might not need all of the below sections. Feel free to only use what will be relevant to your shed.

Vision

As a group come up with the Vision for your shed. The Vision (the Dream) is what you want to achieve in the long term and should be inspiring! What will your shed ideally look like in 5 years' time? *Example: A place that is a safe and inclusive to all men in the community, preserves skills and knowledge, and is held in high regard by the community.*

Mission

As a group come up with a Mission for your shed. The Mission (the What and Why) is one sentence that describes the what and why your shed exists. A good Mission should be clear, memorable, and concise. *Example: To create a safe, supportive and inclusive place for men to take part in activities that benefit their wellbeing and connections to the community.*

Priorities

As a group come up with the priorities for your shed. The priorities are the things you will focus on over the next 5 years.

Example:

- *Best Practice Governance*
- *Create a Safe Shed*
- *Inclusive and respectful culture*
- *Community values the shed*
- *Strong partnerships*
- *Sustainable Membership*
- *Financial sustainability*
- *Support men to be informed about their health.*

Values

As a group come up with the values for your shed. The values describe your culture and beliefs. You may choose sentences or key words.

Example:

- *Honesty*
- *Integrity*
- *Respect*
- *Inclusive*
- *Community focused*
- *Wisdom*

Finances

In this section it should highlight how you are going to 'keep it running' for the next five years. The Committee of Management will create and maintain an annual operational budget that will cover the main costs (utilities, rent, materials, insurance etc) and include the known incomes such as membership, fundraising, grants, sale of products etc.

Review

The Strategic Plan will be reviewed on an annual or bi-annual basis. A complete review will be undertaken at the end of the life of the plan and will form part of the planning process for the next strategic plan.

SWOT Analysis

SWOT Stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. This is a great exercise for establishing a shared vision of where your shed group is at the moment, and where you want to go.

Internal Factors

Start by noting in the first box, what the strengths of your group are, from an organizational perspective. This might be things like a diverse range of skills, positive communication, availability of volunteers for tasks and governance roles, etc.. Then note down the weaknesses of the group. This might be low numbers, not much time available, fairly regular disagreements or a lack of shared vision on how the group should run.

External factors

Note down what the opportunities are for your group. This might be the availability of materials for projects, or a potential grant or facility upgrade, or potential new members or a partnership with another organisation. Then note down the external threats that may affect the group now or in the next few years. E.g. Land/facility availability/capacity, membership numbers up or down. The positive or negative effects of partnerships or particular projects etc. Make sure you think about each item in the external opportunities box, and unpack any treats related to those items.

Finally, have a chat about what you have put down in all the boxes, and what this might mean for your group in the next few years. Record the main points in the Analysis Summary box at the bottom.

INTERNAL FACTORS	
STRENGTHS (+)	WEAKNESSES (-)

EXTERNAL FACTORS	
OPPORTUNITIES (+)	THREATS (-)

ANALYSIS SUMMARY

Actions

This is where you put the actions that you will complete in order to achieve your priorities. There are samples in the action table below – you can delete, change, add the items that are important to your shed. The priorities are the ones listed at the beginning of the document.

Priority 1: Best Practice Governance

Place a sentence explaining why this is a priority.

Example:

For the shed to run smoothly we need clear roles and responsibilities and ensure we meet the requirements of incorporation.

Actions (What)	Responsibility (Who)	Timeline (When)	Outcome (Have we done it)
(if incorp'd) Develop (or review) the Shed's Constitution.	Secretary, with CoM	Annually	A Constitution that has been endorsed at an Annual General Meeting and submitted to Consumer Affairs Victoria.
(if auspice) Develop (or review) an agreement (MOU) with the auspice body, including roles, communication and sunset clauses.	Shed committee & reps from auspice body.	Annually	An agreement signed and endorsed by both organisations.
Define (or review) committee & operation (coordinator, OH&S) roles & responsibilities (job descriptors)	Secretary, with CoM and members	Within 6 months	Endorsed role descriptors for committee positions, operation roles.
Develop and provide an induction program for new committee members and operation roles.	Secretary, with CoM	Ongoing	All committee to have undertaken an induction within 3 months of joining committee.

Goal 2: Create a Safe Shed

To ensure that we have a safe place to run activities and meet and all share in the responsibility to be safe.

Actions (What)	Responsibility (Who)	Timeline (When)	Outcome (Have we done it)
Develop / Review OH&S audit/ processes for workshop.	OH&S/Shed Coordinator, CoM	Ongoing	OH&S Policy developed Safety checklist list developed and undertaken regularly.
Build /renovate a shed/ building	CoM, working party	Year one	Plans completed Funding Secured Projects completed
Review existing facility and develop plan to meet future needs.	CoM, working party	Year one	Plan developed

Maintain tools, machinery and equipment.	Shed Coordinator, CoM	Ongoing	All machinery working. No accidents occurring due to faulty equipment.
Develop and implement an induction for all members.	OH&S/Shed Coordinator, CoM	Ongoing	All members completed an induction session.

Goal 3: Inclusive and respectful culture

To ensure that everyone is valued and respected we need to ensure we have clear values and everyone knows what is expected.

Actions (What)	Responsibility (Who)	Timeline (When)	Outcome (Have we done it)
Create values that represent the shed members and promote them	All members	Year one	Values completed and displayed in shed and on documents.
Committee induction to include information about creating an inclusive and respectful culture	CoM	Ongoing	All CoM completed induction
Reflect on our values and culture by undertaking checks.			

Goal 4: Community values the shed

We want the shed to be valued by the community, and for people in the community to know it is a place that they can come to for help.

Actions (What)	Responsibility (Who)	Timeline (When)	Outcome (Have we done it)
Undertake community projects	CoM, members	Ongoing	Number of projects completed per year.

Goal 5: Strong partnerships

We want the shed to have strong, long standing partnerships that benefit the shed, its members and others in the community.

Actions (What)	Responsibility (Who)	Timeline (When)	Outcome (Have we done it)
Provide regular updates to partners	CoM	Ongoing	Newsletters sent out
Review future projects / activities and seek out partners that can add value and benefit.	CoM	Ongoing	New projects and potential partners listed

Goal 6: Sustainable Membership

We do not exist without our members and need to ensure that we reflect the existing memberships wants and needs as well as offer a space that attracts new members.

Actions (What)	Responsibility (Who)	Timeline (When)	Outcome (Have we done it)

Survey existing members and review/develop activities offered to members.	CoM	Annual	Survey completed Update on programs/ activities planned
Create promotion opportunities – brochures, newspaper articles, website open days.	CoM	Ongoing	
Develop volunteer resources and supports.	CoM	Year two	

Goal 7: Financial sustainability

We do not exist without our members and need to ensure that we reflect the existing memberships wants and needs as well as offer a space that attracts new members.

Actions (What)	Responsibility (Who)	Timeline (When)	Outcome (Have we done it)
Develop an annual budget.	Treasurer, CoM	Annual	
Conduct fundraising activities. Undertake x BBQs, seek other community fundraising opportunities.	CoM		
Build items to sell at local markets. Complete commissioned based work on request.	Shed Coordinator, CoM, members	Ongoing	
Secure grant funding. Develop grant writing skills, identify projects to apply funding for, seek funding sources.	CoM	Ongoing	
Secure sponsors by developing a sponsorship kit and approach local businesses	CoM	Ongoing	

Goal 8: Support men to be informed about their health

The shed has the opportunity to provide its members with information that can improve their health in an relaxed and informal way.

Actions (What)	Responsibility (Who)	Timeline (When)	Outcome (Have we done it)
Build and maintain a brochure display area.	CoM	Within 18 months	A display of brochures. Possibly a person (role) that is responsible for updating/seeking brochures?
Plan or promote local health sessions to members.	CoM	Ongoing	Host x events a year?

Please note that this template has been created using a variety of sources:
Community Tool Box: <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/developing-strategic-and-action-plans>
Club Help: <http://www.clubhelp.org.au/governance/planning>



VMSSA RESOURCE SHEET

HARASSMENT POLICY

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by board on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

Harassment Policy

The Men's Shed Management Committee seeks to develop a shed environment free of discrimination. It believes that no member, volunteer or visitor should be subjected to any form of harassment.

Harassment:

- is a serious form of discrimination
- creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive shed environment
- denies equality of development of opportunity
- has an adverse effect on health, performance and satisfaction of volunteers and participants
- may be the cause of resignation or banning from the Men's Shed.

Harassment is any behaviour, which is not sought, not wanted and can take many forms because of a person's sex, race, age, marital status, disability or sexuality (real or perceived).

Harassment may be in the form of physical, verbal or non-verbal harassment.

The Responsibility of All Members, Volunteers and Participants

- The Men's Shed Management Committee is responsible for what happens in the shed environment.
- It is responsible for making sure that all members, volunteers and participants understand that harassment is not acceptable in the shed, and complaints will be taken seriously.
- It is the responsibility of all members, volunteers and participants to respect the rights of others and never encourage harassment.

A Men's shed free of harassment is a place where people respect and tolerate the rights and differences of others.



VMSSA FACT SHEET

DUTY OF CARE

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by board on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

Please note that this is a template policy for guidance only. For assistance in tailoring this policy to suit your organisation, or for legal advice at a pre-agreed price or training in this area, please do not hesitate to contact Moores to discuss how we can meet your needs. Please call the NFP-Assist Legal Hotline on (03) 9843 0418 or email to NFPAssist@moores.com.au.

OVERVIEW OF YOUR LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Many people approach their role on not-for-profit board more casually than they would a position on a commercial board. They shouldn't. Legally, and certainly ethically, they are subject to the same expectations and responsibilities.

This help sheet is offered not as a definitive guide to your legal responsibilities and liabilities, as these may differ from board to board. Rather, it should be seen as a primer to give you a broad indication of some of the ethical and legal duties you should adhere to during your term.

You should of course seek legal advice if you are in any doubt about your roles and obligations.

Duty to act in good faith and with care and diligence

Board members must exercise their powers and discharge their duties with the care and diligence of a "reasonable person" in their position.

This means you are expected to do what you'd expect anyone else to do in your place - pay attention, put in the work, read the papers carefully, ask about anything you don't understand, and ask again about anything that seems out of place.

The duty to act in good faith comes from Section 181 of the Corporations Act, which reads:

A director or other officer of a corporation must exercise their power and discharge their duties (a) in good faith in the best interests of the corporation; and (b) for a proper purpose.

This duty imposes a fixed standard regardless of the capabilities and state of mind of any individual board member. It's therefore entirely possible that even though a member honestly believes they are acting in the best interests of their board, the law may take the opposite view.

In general terms you will meet the duty of care and diligence if you:

- Make a decision to take, or not to take, action in good faith and for a proper purpose; and,
- Do not have any material personal interest in the matter; and,
- Inform yourself about the matter to the extent you reasonably believe is appropriate; and,
- Reasonably believe that your judgement is in the organisation's best interests.

The board member's belief is taken to be rational unless no reasonable board member could have held it. But to rely on this rule, the board member must actually make a judgement, and not just do nothing.

In addition, you're expected to:

- Attend meetings regularly (if not always - some boards will have minimum requirements);
- Act as an entrepreneur - look for opportunities that can advance your board's cause;
- Make certain that your board undertakes good financial reporting practices;
- Ask questions and seek more information when you believe it is required;
- Define appropriate board policies and supervise their implementation;
- Understand your board's core work;
- Keep abreast of governance issues.

As a board member, you may be able to delegate your powers. This will protect you from a breach of your duty of care and diligence if, after making appropriate inquiries, you believe "reasonably and in good faith" that the delegate is reliable and competent. You're not expected (or allowed) to micromanage the finances, but you have to be satisfied that the Chief Financial Officer and treasurer are on top of things.

Similarly, you can rely on the professional advice of others if the reliance is in good faith and you have independently assessed the advice. Such reliance is reasonable unless the contrary is proven.

Built into this law is an understanding that board members with a high level of expertise will attract a higher standard of care than other members. This is because a board member with less expertise can more readily rely on the advice of another.

Duty to act in the best interests of the organisation as a whole

You may have been put on the board as a staff or shareholder representative, or as a representative of the users, a 'consumer representative'. You may have been elected by a faction, or a region, or a sub-group.

It makes no difference. You can, and should, pass on the views of your people to the full board, but when the time comes to take a decision, you have to act in the interests of the organisation, not those of your supporters or sponsors.

Duty not to misuse information or misuse your position

Linked to the previous point, board members have to act in the best interests of the organisation, not themselves.

If you hear that the organisation wants to buy a plot of land, you can't dash out and buy it first and then resell it; that's using privileged information for your own ends.

The law prohibits board members from using their position to gain an advantage for themselves or another, or to cause detriment to the entity they are governing. A breach of this law may carry civil or criminal penalties. A board member also must not misuse information gained through their position.

There is significant overlap between these duties, the duty to avoid a conflict of interest, and the duty not to abuse a corporate opportunity. Both are detailed below.

Duty not to abuse a corporate opportunity

Being a board member may involve discussing a range of opportunities, including business opportunities. It is therefore possible that board members may, by virtue of their position, be made aware of several potentially profitable opportunities.

The example of the land sale cited in the previous section above is one such opportunity.

This type of action shows the temptation that can face some board members to take up such opportunities themselves at the expense of the entity they are governing for.

The law may view this as abusing a corporate opportunity.

Duty to avoid/ disclose any relevant potential conflict of interest

A conflict of interest arises when a board member's duty to act in the interests of the board of which s/he is a member is compromised by some other personal or professional interest - if there's a chance that you (or yours) are going to benefit from a decision made by the board, the board needs to know about it.

The definition of what constitutes an interest, unfortunately, differs from state to state. Victoria says 'pecuniary interest', which only covers money, while the NSW law is wider. Worse, the consequences differ, too: in Victoria all you have to do is report your interest, while in NSW you then have to leave the room and not vote on the matter.

Most boards will be governed by rules that have particular provisions for the handling of conflicts of interest so you should check if such rules exist for your group and then follow them to the letter.

Duty to maintain confidentiality

As mentioned above, you're not allowed to use confidential information for your own benefit, and you're not allowed to pass it on to anybody else.

The next question, of course, is what's confidential? Minutes? Decisions? Names? Ask the chair (who should be able to point you to a written policy on the issue, or at least a minute of the board).

Don't just assume you have to shut up about everything, either; in the interests of transparency, your board should be willing to release all information about your organisation that doesn't have personal or financial consequences.

Duty to observe the constitution

You're bound by what's in your organisation's constitution, and its bylaws, and its policies, and the standing orders.

All of these should be written down, and you should get a copy. You're not legally bound by traditions, conventions, or understandings, though you probably shouldn't trample all over these until you've learned why they're there.

Duty not to trade while insolvent

One of the more notable duties, trading while insolvent is one of the few things that does have the potential to cause you real trouble - as an organisation, as a board and as an individual.

The insolvent trading provisions are some of the most important in the current company law. These provisions compel board members not to allow the organisation to trade while insolvent (unable to pay debts as and when they fall due) and not to allow the organisation to become insolvent.

You will breach this duty if you fail to prevent your organisation from incurring a debt when a reasonable board member would have been aware that there were reasonable grounds for suspecting the organisation's debts could not be paid as and when they fell due. Even if the organisation was solvent at the time of incurring the debt, an offence is committed if the organisation becomes insolvent by incurring the debt in question.

In other words, if the organisation is in a death spiral, you have to close down while there's still enough money in hand to pay everybody what they're owed.

Penalties for insolvent trading are particularly severe. Civil penalties of up to \$200,000 or disqualification from directorship may be imposed. They also apply to community sector organisations, though in practice the penalties may not be as severe.

In very serious cases, board members may be criminally liable, which can mean a prison sentence. For this reason, it's vital that legal and financial advice is sought at the slightest hint of danger.

Not knowing is no excuse. As a board member you have a duty to understand the financials.

Duty to avoid negligence, fraud and other wrongs

A board member must not engage in any activities which amount to fraud, negligence, and default, breach of trust or breach of duty.

Where such conduct leads to the organisation suffering loss or damage, the member may have to transfer an amount of property to the organisation equivalent to the loss or damage their actions have caused.

Other relevant laws

In addition to the duties outlined above, there are a range of generally applied laws that board members should keep in mind as they carry out their role. Board members are, after all, responsible for ensuring that their board is entirely legally compliant.

The following list is by no means exhaustive, but it's a good starting point to indicate some of the areas of law board members have to satisfactorily understand.

- **Occupational Health and Safety** (designed to ensure that workers are safe and secure in their place of work)
- **Environmental Law** (a vast branch of law that is generally concerned with pollution control, environmental and occupational health, ecologically sustainable development and resource management)
- **Negligence** (governing cases where the duty of care is breached, causing a foreseeable kind of material damage to another)
- **Trade Practices Act** (a powerful and important Act, which includes a section prohibiting misleading and deceptive conduct)
- **Anti-Discrimination** (all organisations and individuals are obliged to meet this legislation, which has a range of provisions that may differ from state to state)
- **Contracts Law** (could apply to a property lease, a computer rental agreement, an agreement to supply services, etc.)
- **Privacy Laws** (designed to govern the way personal information about individuals is collected, stored, used and disclosed)
- **Food Safety Laws** (including requirements for the handling, storage, transport and display of foods)
- **Defamation** (designed to protect the reputation of individuals and organisations by allowing the right to sue for damages)
- **Fundraising** (laws vary from state to state but most states now require formal approval and licensing prior to fundraising activities being initiated).

[Name of organisation] has a duty of care to provide a safe workplace, and ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that workers, volunteers and guests, and other people are not exposed to health and safety risks.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Please note that it is not just the Committee of management that has a duty of care, this extends to the members of the community group, to ensure that all workers, volunteers and guests are not exposed to health and safety risks. If you see something that is not right, or not being done correctly, don't ignore it, and say it's not my problem, point it out and have it fixed.



VMsa RESOURCE SHEET

WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by board on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

This document has been prepared to assist sheds by providing a basic understanding of their obligations under the Working with Children Act 2005.

The Working with Children Act 2005 is a long and complicated document, and the VMsa recommends that in addition to this document you also consult with Working with Children Check Unit of The Department of Justice to seek clarification of any concerns you may have. Their telephone number is 1300 652 879 and their hours are 8.30am – 5.00pm Monday – Friday excluding Public Holiday.

Generally speaking, Men's sheds are an adult organisation, and membership is open to all persons over the age of 18 years.

If your shed does accept membership from persons under 18 years of age, you will need to investigate your responsibility under the Act and with the Working with Children Check Unit.

You may find that by accepting members under 18 years of age, that all your members who are present at the sessions that involve the members under 18 years of age will require a Working with Children Check.

You will also need to check with your insurer, to see if person under the age of 18 years are covered under your insurance policies.

Should the shed choose to participate in activities that include children, either conducted in the shed or an external venue such as playgroups, kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools, shopping centre or festivals, those shed members that are a part of this activity and are working direct and interacting with the children MUST have a current Working with Children check.

Under the terms of the Working with Children ACT a child or children means any person under 18 years of age.

You will also need to look at who is providing the insurance coverage for these persons under the age of 18.

If the activities are conducted as an excursion from a play group, kindergarten or school, the shed will need to check and clarify that the children are covered by the play group, kindergarten or schools insurance policy.

If this is to be a regular program you should look at forming a formal arrangement via a Memorandum of Understanding or MOU.

ABOUT THE WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

The Working with Children Check assists in protecting children from sexual or physical harm by ensuring that people who work with, or care for, them are subject to a screening process.

If you are doing or intending to do **child-related work** and do not qualify for an exemption, you need a Check.

To help you decide if you are doing child-related work, go to [Who needs a Check?](#) or go to the following website <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/home/about+the+check/who+needs+a+check/>

Organisations need to:

- determine which paid and volunteer workers require a Check
- ensure workers have a valid Check
- ensure new starters apply for a Check before commencing child-related work.

The Check is just one of an organisation's responsibilities in creating and maintaining a child-safe environment. It screens a person's criminal records and any reports about professional conduct by the bodies listed in [What is checked](#).

The Check does not assess a person's suitability to work with or care for children in a particular role. It is the responsibility of organisations to assess if a person is suitable to work with children and to continue monitoring their workers' behaviour around children.

Organisations should be vigilant at all times by doing thorough reference checks and establishing sound, ongoing supervision practices so that children are safe from harm.

Organisations must comply with the [Child Safe Standards](#) that have been introduced as part of the Victorian Government's response to the [Betrayal of Trust Inquiry](#). These are compulsory minimum standards under the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* that apply to organisations that provide services for children. The standards help ensure the safety of children. Organisations must also comply with the [Reportable conduct scheme](#) requirements that came into effect on 1 July 2017. For more information go to [Commission for Children and Young People](#).



VMSA RESOURCE SHEET

CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by board on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

Please note that this is a template policy for guidance only. For assistance in tailoring this policy to suit your organisation, or for legal advice at a pre-agreed price or training in this area, please do not hesitate to contact Moores to discuss how we can meet your needs. Please call the NFP-Assist Legal Hotline on (03) 9843 0418 or email to NFPAssist@moores.com.au.

Note: Within the general principles expressed here and elsewhere in this toolkit, more specific procedural provisions may be necessary to deal with particular circumstances and difficult situations – for example, sports coaching may legitimately involve some forms of physical contact, and some people with disabilities may legitimately require carefully monitored physical restraint. Such specific provisions must be developed by staff and stakeholders in the organisations that require them and cannot be prescribed on a one-size-fits-all model. The Victorian Child-Safe Standards suggest that to remove any ambiguity employees should be required to sign a statement that they agree to abide by the Code of Conduct. If your organisation already has in place a code of conduct, you can consider incorporating the below into your existing document.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EMPLOYEES, VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRACTORS WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Management, staff, volunteers and contractors at [Name of Organisation] are required to abide by this Code.

Under the CEO, management will:

1. Be responsible for the overall welfare and wellbeing of staff and volunteers;
2. Be accountable for managing and maintaining a duty of care towards staff and volunteers; and
3. Nominate a Child Protection Officer to provide information and support to all staff, volunteers, children, young people and their carers regarding child protection matters.

All people involved in the care of children on behalf of [Name of Organisation] will:

1. Work towards the achievement of the aims and purposes of the organisation;
2. Be responsible for relevant administration of programs and activities in their area;
3. Maintain a duty of care towards others involved in these programs and activities;
4. Establish and maintain a child-safe environment in the course of their work;
5. Be fair, considerate and honest with others;
6. Treat children and young people with respect and value their ideas and opinions;
7. Act as positive role models in their conduct with children and young people;
8. Be professional in their actions;
9. Maintain strict impartiality;
10. Comply with specific organisational guidelines on physical contact with children;

11. Respect the privacy of children, their families and teachers/carers, and only disclose information to people who have a need to know;
12. Maintain a child-safe environment for children and young people;
13. Operate within the policies and guidelines of [Name of Organisation]; and
14. Contact the police if a child is at immediate risk of abuse (telephone 000).

No person shall:

1. Shame, humiliate, oppress, belittle or degrade children or young people;
2. Unlawfully discriminate against any child;
3. Engage in any activity with a child or young person that is likely to physically or emotionally harm them;
4. Initiate unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person, or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do for themselves;
5. Be alone with a child or young person unnecessarily and for more than a very short time;
6. Develop a 'special' relationship with a specific child or young person for their own needs;
7. Show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention;
8. Arrange contact, including online contact, with children or young people outside of the organisation's programs and activities;
9. Photograph or video a child or young person without the consent of the child and his/her parents or guardians;
10. Work with children or young people while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs;
11. Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children;
12. Use inappropriate language in the presence of children; or
13. Do anything in contravention of the organisation's policies, procedures or this Code of Conduct.

What happens if you breach this Code of Conduct

If you breach this Code of Conduct you will face disciplinary action, including and up to termination of employment or cessation of engagement with the organisation.

AUTHORISATION

[Signature of Board Secretary]

[Date of approval by the Board]

[Name of organisation]



VMSSA RESOURCE SHEET

OHS REQUIREMENTS

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by board on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

The Victorian Men's Shed Association Inc. takes great care in collating and compiling these resources. The ultimate responsibility for the accuracy and appropriateness of the outcomes from the use of these resources lies with the user. The VMSSA provides samples / examples of resources to assist sheds in developing tools specific to their needs. These documents are not templates and should be used in conjunction with any / all resources available that are specific to the requirements of the user.

OHS Requirements

Under the Victorian OHS law, all businesses that have workers are required to comply with OHS requirements.

Men's sheds are generally not classified as businesses, as they are incorporated not-for-profit incorporated associations, who work with volunteer members that are not employees.

However there are exceptions to this, such as sheds that have a paid employees. This could include a casual, part-time or full time employee, such as a coordinator, shed manager, book keeper. If you have a paid employee you MUST follow workplace OHS requirements.

The OHS requirements within men's sheds are very simple, whether your shed is an incorporated body, an auspiced group or a program of a larger body, you might not into the category of being a business, and you might not have any paid staff, but you still have a common law requirement to provide a "duty of care" that MUST be provided to all members, visitors, guest and contractors that attend your shed and to provide a safe environment for them to conduct their business.

This includes but is not limited to:

- providing and maintaining a work environment without risks to health and safety
- providing and maintaining safe plant and structures
Plant means machinery, equipment, appliance, container, implement and tool. It includes components of those things, as well as anything fitted or connected to those things.
- providing and maintaining safe systems of work
- using, handling and storing plant, structures and substances in a safe manner
- providing adequate welfare facilities
- providing any necessary information, training, instruction or supervision that is necessary for protection of all persons from risks to their health and safety, and
- Monitoring the health of workers and the conditions at the workplace for the prevention of illness or injury of workers.

A duty imposed on an organisation to ensure health and safety requires the organisation to adopt a risk management approach that eliminates health and safety risks as much as is reasonably practicable. If it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate health and safety risks, the duty is to minimise them as much as is reasonably practicable

The simplest way to ensure that your shed has the necessary evidence to prove that you have adopted a risk management approach that eliminates health and safety risks as much as is reasonably practicable, is to have policies, procedures and checklists as a part of your sheds Occupational Health and Safety plan, and ensure that these documents are followed, completed and signed off where necessary.


These documents may be incorporated in your sheds member induction manual, or they may be individual policies that are discussed with and made available to your members, and reviewed regularly by the committee and your members.



VMISA RESOURCE SHEET

TEST AND TAG – ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT REGISTER

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by board on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

<div>  </div>						
TEST AND TAG - ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT REGISTER						
Equipment should be inspected, electrically tested and tagged in accordance with the appropriate Code of Practice						
#	Equipment Description	Serial #	Inspection/Test Date	Result	Next Inspection/Test Date	Completed By
1.						
2.						
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#	Equipment Description	Serial #	Inspection/Test Date	Result	Next Inspection/Test Date	Completed By
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VMSA RESOURCE SHEET

SAFETY PROCEDURES – WARNING TAGS

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by board on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

SAFETY PROCEDURES

WARNING TAGS

The Victorian Men's Shed Association recommends that industry accepted tags are used to issue warnings to potential users **NOT** to use a piece of equipment because it is faulty or is being serviced.





VMSA RESOURCE SHEET

EVACUATION PLANS

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by board on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

A person located anywhere in the shed should be able to respond to an Emergency Alarm by quickly and safely exiting the building and moving to a safe area.

For most sheds, Emergency Exits will be obvious and easily recognised.

However, they must be clearly marked and, in the shed work area, ought to have access paths clearly marked (such as painted floor marks). Access to Emergency Exits must always be kept clear.

It is recommended that a sketch of the shed 'footprint' be produced showing the location of Emergency Exits and Emergency Equipment such as:

- MSDS Register
- First Aid Kit
- Telephone
- Fire Extinguishers
- Fire Hose

Other useful information to have on the sketch includes:

- Electricity Main Board
- Water mains
- Gas mains
- Sewer Mains
- Fuel & Inflammables storage
- Chemicals storage area.

EMERGENCY ASSEMBLY POINTS

Each shed should include, on the sketch, a safe and sufficiently large, nearby place where all Shed members and visitors should move to in the event of an Emergency that requires an Evacuation.

Following an Evacuation, a person in charge of operations will ensure that all people are accounted for and notify the attending authorities accordingly. The member in charge of operations will be the sole spokesperson. One of the best ways to ensure all people are accounted for would be to check of the attendance register, so do not forget to take it to the assembly point.

MEDIA HANDLING

If any TV, Radio or print media seeks information about the Emergency, the Shed members should not give interviews and instead refer them to the President or Chairman of the shed Committee.

Note:

Auspiced Sheds may have other arrangements for dealing with media. The auspiced shed requirements will take precedence in this case.

EVACUATION DIAGRAM BUILDING A

389 Somewhere Street, Melbourne



DATE: August 2014

VALIDITY DATE: August 2019



Statcom Systems Pty Ltd (03) 9894 3888



Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by board on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

[illegible]

[illegible]



VMSSA RESOURCE SHEET

HOW TO SET A BUDGET

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by board on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

Please note that this resource sheet is for guidance only and is an example of the types of income and expense items that may occur within a Men's Shed, each shed will have variations to this document and to the Excel template.

The point of setting a budget is simply to provide a guide to the income and expenses of the shed, to ascertain what the costs of running the shed are, to ensure you have a mechanism in place to ensure you have the income available to cover the costs. If you do not have the income, you will not be able to pay your bills, and may lose access to service or suppliers.

INCOME

There are a number of potential items that you can look at in regards to income and these can include:

- **Membership fees**
This may include an annual membership fee, a joining fee or maybe an attendance fee
- **Sales of goods made at the shed**
You might be making wooden wishing wells, outdoor furniture, bookcases etc for resale
- **Sale of surplus donated goods**
AS the name suggest the sale of gods that have been donated that are surplus to requirements, this may be to members, or to the public at market days, fetes, or via EBay or Gumtree
- **Sale of merchandise to members**
This could include polo shirts, caps, aprons, and name badges to recover the cost of purchase not necessarily for profit.
- **Donations received**
Donations that might be received from the public or from community groups
- **Specific purpose funding**
Such as Local State or Federal Government funding grants applied for a specific purpose
- **Fundraising activities**
There are a number of items that could be included in this category and could include:
 - Raffles – In House – use of donated equipment
 - Drinks on sold to members – supply of soft drinks or tea, coffee
 - Food on sold to members – sausage sizzle for lunch on Wednesdays
 - Special event catering – Australia day function, Melbourne cup luncheon, Grand Final luncheon, Bathurst Luncheon, Christmas Break up, AGM catering
- **Projects**
This could include items that are made for local schools, play groups, kindergartens or other community organisations or members of the public, where the shed is paid a fee to build, supply and install something. This may be a buddy seat, an animal enclosure, a mud kitchen, or outdoor seating or tables.

EXPENSES

There are many expenses that can be incurred in the operations of a shed and would include many of the following items.

- VMSA membership cost
- Insurance costs
- Lease / Licence / Rental costs
- Occupancy costs – repairs, glass replacement, light bulbs etc
- Electricity costs
- Gas costs
- Telephone and internet connection and rental charges and call charges
- Test and Tag costs for electrical equipment
- Computer and printer purchase costs
- Computer and printer operation costs, annual software licence, ink cartridges, paper etc
- Printing costs – business cards, letterheads, annual reports, funding request
- Accounting software package – MYOB, Quicken, Xero
- Annual accountant or book keeper fees
- Annual Consumer Affair return
- Annual General Meeting costs – room hire, printing of reports
- Post Office Box Rental
- Tea, Coffee, biscuit costs
- Cleaning cost purchase – mop, bucket, dish rack, broom, vacuum cleaner, rubbish bins
- Cleaning costs ongoing - dishwashing detergent, tea towels, sponges, paper towel, spray and wipe etc
- Toilet expenses - Toilet paper, hand towels, soap
- Purchase of member items – shirts, caps, name badges
- Internet costs, Domain name registration, web hosting package
- Purchase / replacement of cutlery – – knives, forks, spoons
- Purchase / replacement of crockery – cups, mugs, plates, platters
- Purchase / replacement of cooking utensils – knives, serving spoons, tongs, pots and pans, trays,
- Purchase / replacement of tools and equipment
- Purchase / replacement tools or spare parts – saw blades, drill bits
- Purchase / replacement of PPE equipment – eye protection, haring protection
- Development costs for Induction manual
- Development costs for OH & S manual
- Development cost for Website design



VMSA RESOURCE SHEET

GRANTS AND FUNDING SOURCES

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by board on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

GRANTS AND FUNDING SOURCES

There are many sources of funding that can be available to Men's Sheds. They can include grants from Local Governments, State Governments, Federal Governments, or the general philanthropic community, including Banks, Foundations and Trusts.

Grants normally have a criteria that you need to meet, and specific items that they will fund. Make sure you read the specifics for the grant you are looking at, and where possible talk to the organisation that is providing the funding about your project.

Some grants are only available to not-for-profits, and some are only available to organisations with DGR status. If you do not have DGR, talking with the organisation will confirm if you can be auspiced by an organisation with DGR status.

There are very few grants that will provide funding for ongoing operational costs, most grants are for a once only amount, there are many grants that will cover the costs of purchase and installation of building renovations or extensions and the purchase installation and training of specific equipment.

HOW DO I FIND WHAT GRANTS ARE AVAILABLE

There are a number of websites that list the grants that are available and these include:

Australian Government Community Grant Hub

<https://www.communitygrants.gov.au/>

Victorian Government Grant finder

<https://www.vic.gov.au/grants.html>

Community Crime Prevention – Via Dept of Justice & Regulation

<https://www.crimeprevention.vic.gov.au/grants/community-safety-fund>

Opened from July 3 to September 25 in 2017, announcement of successful applications generally within 3 months of closing date

Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR)

<https://www.frrr.org.au/>

Grant Guru Community

registration required

<http://community.grantready.com.au/>

Australia Post

<http://ourneighbourhood.com.au/our-grants.html>

Bank of Melbourne

<http://info.bankofmelbourne.com.au/communityhub/>

Bendigo Bank

Refer to your local branch for details

Department of Veterans Affairs

<https://www.dva.gov.au/consultation-and-grants/grants>

State Trustees

<https://www.statetrustees.com.au/all-our-services/state-trustees-foundation/apply-for-a-grant/>

Membership fee required

Our Community

Membership from \$85.00 per annum single user to \$150.00 per annum up to 10 users

<https://www.fundingcentre.com.au/grant/home>

Grants Hub

Membership from \$199.00 per annum.

<https://www.thegrantshub.com.au/contact-us>



VMSA RESOURCE SHEET

MEDIA RELATIONS POLICY

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by Board on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

Please note that this is a template policy for guidance only. For assistance in tailoring this policy to suit your organisation, please seek your own independent legal advice.

Local, state, national and international media are vital partners in achieving the goals of [Name of Organisation]. In order to maximise the advantages of media presentation and minimise the risks of media misrepresentation it is necessary to establish guidelines for how media contacts will be conducted.

It is not the intention of this policy to curb freedom of speech or to enforce strict rules and regulations. Rather, the intention is to establish a framework for achieving an effective working relationship with the media. The organisation welcomes the opportunity to talk to the media and, through them, to debate issues in the public arena.

In dealing with the media, staff, Board members and other volunteers should be conscious that they may be seen as representatives of the organisation and should therefore avoid making comments or participating in photo opportunities that may damage the long-term reputation of [Name of Organisation].

PURPOSE

[Name of Organisation] works with the media in order to

- advocate for the goals of the organisation
- promote the work of the organisation
- inform the public of the details of the organisation
- assist in fundraising for the organisation

In order to ensure that these purposes can be fulfilled, this policy regulates the choice of people entitled to speak for [Name of Organisation].

The media themselves have a vital role to play on behalf of the community in holding [Name of Organisation] to account for its policies and actions. It is important that they have access to officers and members and to background information to assist them in this role.

To balance this, [Name of Organisation] must have the capacity to defend itself from any unfounded criticism, and will ensure that the public are properly informed of all the relevant facts (if necessary using other channels of communication).

It is the responsibility of all staff, board members and volunteers to ensure that effective media relations are maintained in order to achieve the aims of [Name of Organisation]. Naturally, in doing this, certain legal constraints might apply (eg not making comment on current court cases, especially those before a jury).

This policy deals with the day-to-day relationship between [Name of Organisation] and the media and does not address how the organisation will work with the media in a crisis, for which separate guidelines are available as an Our Community Helpsheets on [What to do in a Media Crisis](#).

CORE POLICY

[Name of Organisation] operates on the values of

- **Honesty:** The organisation will never knowingly mislead the public, media or staff on an issue or news story.
- **Transparency:** The organisation will promote openness and accessibility in our dealings with the media, whilst complying with the law and maintaining confidentiality when appropriate.
- **Clarity:** All communications with the media will be written in plain English
- **Balance:** Information provided to the media by [Name of Organisation] will as far as humanly possible be objective, balanced, accurate, informative and timely.

[Name of Organisation] should seek to establish and maintain a good and open relationship with the media. It is important that the organisation works with the media to communicate important public information messages about its work and its goals.

However, contact concerning any significant matter in the name of or on behalf of [Name of Organisation] should only be made by staff, Board members and other volunteers where:

- They have consulted the Communications Officer nominated by the Board
- They have the required expertise to speak on the issue under discussion
- They have some experience in media relations.

Where any of these criteria do not apply, staff, Board members and volunteers are recommended to exercise extreme caution and to seek guidance from the most senior staff or Board member available.

AUTHORISATION

<Signature of Board Secretary>

<Date of approval by the Board>

<Name of organisation>



MEDIA RELATIONS PROCEDURES

Procedures number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by CEO on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board shall nominate a Communications Officer to coordinate [Name of Organisation]'s relationships with the media.

The Communications Officer, CEO and the Board Chair are all authorised to speak on behalf of [Name of Organisation].

Other staff, Board members and volunteers are advised to ensure they are properly briefed and guided by the Communications Officer, CEO or Board Chair before talking to the media on any issue related to [Name of Organisation].

Where information or public comment is requested or required, the Communications Officer shall determine the most appropriate person to respond.

Staff, Board members and other volunteers, and third parties, are encouraged to deliver public presentations that discuss [Name of Organisation]'s work and its goals, provided that they make it clear where such presentations are or are not authorised by the organisation.

All staff, Board members and other volunteers must observe [Name of Organisation]'s Privacy Policy in relation to client records.

PROCESSES

Significant statements on behalf of [Name of Organisation] shall be made as authorised by the Communications Officer, CEO or Board Chair as detailed above.

It should always be made absolutely clear whether the views put forward regarding any issue relating to [Name of Organisation] are those of the organisation or of an individual. At all times consideration should be given as to how the correspondence may affect the reputation of [Name of Organisation].

The Communications Officer is responsible for:

- Producing and updating a list of key contacts for distribution to local press and radio and TV stations. The Communications Officer can also be contacted for preliminary discussions on any story or if a journalist or researcher is unsure who to approach for a comment.
- Producing the organisation's annual public relations plan, which shall be consistent with the organisation's business plan and marketing plan.
- Coordinating all media conferences for [Name of Organisation]. All such conferences shall be videotaped by the organisation.
- Authorising all media releases from [Name of Organisation], and for mounting them on the organisation's website. All media releases must also be checked and approved by staff in charge of the relevant area before distribution.
- Being involved in any approaches to the media to feature [Name of Organisation]'s work.
- Receiving and coordinating a response to all approaches from all national press, radio or TV stations or specialist press.

All staff, Board members and volunteers are responsible for:

- Providing advice (preferably before the issue becomes public knowledge) to the Communications Officer on any issues that are likely to be complex or contentious or to be sustained for any length of time. In such a situation the Communications Officer will work with the relevant staff and Board members to produce a communications plan which will ensure that balanced, timely information is provided to keep all parties informed.
- Ensuring that no photos of clients, patients, employees, or students shall be released to the public via advertising, news media, or internet, or by any other means, without the approval of the Communications Officer, who shall satisfy themselves that the organisation's Privacy Policy has been observed.
- Notifying the Communications Officer of any contact made in the name of [Name of Organisation] to the media and providing the name of the reporter or writer and the media outlet they represent.

Any significant media contacts with [Name of Organisation]'s staff or members on any issue likely to prove contentious shall, where possible, be videotaped.

Any filming or taping on [Name of Organisation]'s property or of the organisation's proceedings by the media is subject to prior permission of the Communications Officer, CEO or Board Chair.

Every effort should be made to assist the media in their inquiries. Where media queries involve requests for information that will require substantial staff work to produce, such work must be authorised by the CEO. It will usually be necessary to provide information in addition to that which is requested in order to set the facts and figures in context. Requests for detailed information of this nature, whether from the local or national media, should be referred to the Communications Officer.

[Name of Organisation] reserves the right to withhold certain sensitive information concerning, say, commercial transactions or governmental negotiations. Any such information will be clearly labelled and clearly notified to relevant staff.

If any unauthorised releases of confidential information do occur, an investigation will take place to establish who was responsible and appropriate action will be taken.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [What to do in a Media Crisis](#)
- [Privacy Policy](#)
- [Board Confidentiality Policy](#)

AUTHORISATION

<Signature of CEO>

<Name of CEO>

<Date>



VMSEA RESOURCE SHEET

LEGAL REQUIREMENT - MOU

The Victorian Men's Shed Association Inc. takes great care in collating and compiling these resources. The ultimate responsibility for the accuracy and appropriateness of the outcomes from the use of these resources lies with the user. The VMSEA provides samples / examples of resources to assist sheds in developing tools specific to their needs. These documents are not templates and should be used in conjunction with any / all resources available that are specific to the requirements of the user.

What is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)?

An MOU can be described as 'an agreement to agree'. It is sometimes an agreement to enter into a more specific and comprehensive contract or agreement at a later time or when particular circumstances arise, after further negotiations.

An MOU will often establish a framework for the collaboration between the organisations and set out the common goals or vision of the parties to the MOU. In general, an MOU will not deal with the specific details of particular projects. An MOU therefore tends to be more of a 'high level' document.

When should a MOU be used?

The not-for-profit sector will typically use an MOU when organisations wish to co-operate and/or share information with each other, allowing each to make the most of the other's specialist skills or knowledge.

What issues will a MOU cover?

This will depend on the nature of the collaboration you want with another organisation. Typically an MOU document may set out:

- details of the organisations entering into the MOU
- objectives of the arrangement and goals or expected benefits
- agreed actions, services and areas of support
- strategies and mechanisms for dealing with common issues
- the term of the MOU (an agreed start and review/end date) and the circumstances in which it may be ended early
- the agreed roles of each organisation
- the naming of a position (or person) in each organisation as a central point of contact for the MOU
- a communication plan, and
- dispute resolution statement.

What are my obligations under a MOU?

Your obligations under the MOU will be outlined in the document and may include obligations to:

- share information (which may or may not include confidential information)
- work in co-operation with the other party on particular types of projects
- actively promote events/activities of the other party
- refer clients to the other party, and
- jointly host events/seminars/workshops.

Your obligations under the MOU should set out what your organisation has agreed to do. You should read an MOU very carefully before signing it, to make sure it reflects what you have agreed.

Is an MOU a legally binding document – like a contract?

Generally, MOUs are written in a way that indicates they are not contractually binding, and are more a statement of intent or an 'agreement to agree'. This is because the courts will generally not recognise agreements to enter into contracts as binding contracts themselves. However, whether an MOU is binding or not will be highly dependent on the terms of the MOU.

Additional resources

Related Not-for-profit Law Resources

The Not-for-profit Law Information Hub (www.nfplaw.org.au) has further resources on the following topics:

- Auspice agreements – www.nfplaw.org.au/auspicing
- Joint Venture agreements – www.nfplaw.org.au/partnerships
- Understanding contracts - <https://www.nfplaw.org.au/contractsoverview>
- A base template non-binding MOU – www.nfplaw.org.au/MOU



VMsa RESOURCE SHEET

LEGAL REQUIREMENT LEASE / LICENCE

The Victorian Men's Shed Association Inc. takes great care in collating and compiling these resources. The ultimate responsibility for the accuracy and appropriateness of the outcomes from the use of these resources lies with the user. The VMsa provides samples / examples of resources to assist sheds in developing tools specific to their needs. These documents are not templates and should be used in conjunction with any / all resources available that are specific to the requirements of the user.

The most common document entered into by a Men's Shed is a lease or Licence for the building they occupy. Many local council refer to these as a Licence agreement.

These documents outline the requirement of the building owner (the Council) and the tenant (the Men's Shed), to clarify the responsibilities of each party.

Items that are covered within a lease / licence agreement will generally include:

- The commencement date of the licence
- The names and of the two parties entering into the contract
- Detail of the area under the licence
- The term of the agreement
- The amount of the fee to be paid
- How payment is to be made
- What the permitted use of the premises is
- Any requirements for recognition
- Permitted hours of operation
- Any specific conditions
 - Noise
 - Vehicle parking
 - Alcohol consumption
 - Management and security of the premises
 - Smoking
 - Other facilities
 - Revenue generation
 - Outgoings

Other items that will be covered may include:

- Repairs , alterations and damage
- Insurance
- Use of the Licensed area
- Licensee obligations during the licence
- Sub letting
- Licensee obligations at the end of the licence

It is imperative that the Committee of Management of the shed understand this document, and understand what they can or cannot do within the area that is covered under the lease / licence and understand what costs will be involved to comply with the requirements of the lease / licence they are entering.

If there is any doubt, please seek advice from the VMsa or a legal representative.



VMSSA RESOURCE SHEET

LEGAL REQUIREMENT - INSURANCE

The Victorian Men's Shed Association Inc. takes great care in collating and compiling these resources. The ultimate responsibility for the accuracy and appropriateness of the outcomes from the use of these resources lies with the user. The VMSSA provides samples / examples of resources to assist sheds in developing tools specific to their needs. These documents are not templates and should be used in conjunction with any / all resources available that are specific to the requirements of the user.

The information below has been provided as a Help Sheet by Our Community, for further details please refer to http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/insurance/view_help_sheet.do?articleid=263

WHAT TYPES OF INSURANCE DOES MY ORGANISATION NEED?

Insurance is not a substitute for risk management. Getting insurance should only come into the picture when you've done all you can to minimise risk.

No one can tell you what sort of insurance you need - you need to consider your organisation's own risk profile and appetite against what insurance policies can cover and will cost.

When comparing policy quotes, make sure you take particular note of limits, excesses, exclusions and geographic coverage.

Some not-for-profit organisations believe that because they have become an incorporated association, they cannot be sued. This is not the case.

Incorporation creates a legal entity that is separate from the individual members. Board members of unincorporated bodies can be sued as individuals. Incorporation provides a certain amount of limited liability for members. However, it may not protect the organisation or individual directors in cases where negligence can be proven.

The more you can minimise your exposure to risk through rigorous processes and procedures, the better off everyone will be.

For most not-for-profit organisations, insurance is an essential component of risk management and a key way to manage losses. Even the most prudent and effective organisations can't foresee everything and prevent accidents from occurring.

You want to make sure that the people who help you and are part of your organisation are covered for any potential liability, injury or loss. You also want to ensure that your equipment, materials and property are protected.

A major reason why you need insurance is to ensure that you are not forced to close if you are exposed to a claim. While not all claims are enormous, the possibility of a multi-million-dollar claim does exist.

Burglaries and thefts are also a very real possibility for most organisations and the effects of losing equipment can be devastating.

Obviously, insurance costs money, so it is important to verify that you are insured for exactly what you need and not for anything you don't really need.

Are you already covered?

Check to see if you are already covered by a blanket government insurance scheme or a funding body scheme. In some states, some government departments will provide coverage or partial coverage for the groups they fund.

If you are included in a blanket coverage scheme, check your own insurance cover and make sure you're not over-insured or double insured. There may be components of your organisation's policy that you can scale back.

The different types of insurance

Some of the insurance detailed below will not be applicable to all organisations. It is worthwhile to discuss your particular insurance needs with an insurer or broker.

It's important for you to evaluate that advice and seek alternative quotations, making sure you are comparing equivalent products and cover. Policies that sound the same could have exclusions that could make them useless to your organisation.

The types of insurance most commonly applicable to not-for-profit groups in Australia are outlined below.

Public and Product Liability Insurance

A public liability insurance policy is necessary for an organisation to protect itself against claims of negligence made by third parties in relation to injury or property damage arising from the organisation's operations.

For example, it is likely to cover a person who enters your premises, slips on a wet surface and sustains a serious head injury.

The policy may also cover injuries resulting from products sold or supplied by your organisation. You should check the extent of your cover to ensure that product liability is included in your policy if relevant. This is particularly important for organisations that sell food or products as part of their day-to-day activities or for fundraising.

You should also check to see to what extent your volunteers are covered. Regardless, it is important to keep detailed records of all your volunteers, and to establish and communicate clear guidelines setting out volunteers' roles and activities.

Directors and Officers Liability Insurance

As mentioned above, while incorporation does provide some protection to board and committee members, it does not protect individuals from being sued for acts of negligence. A board member who negligently gives wrong advice, asks someone to perform a dangerous task or dismisses staff without proper authority or process exposes themselves to being sued.

Where such cases can be proven, the personal assets of negligent board/committee members can be seized to meet any damages. This is where Directors and Officers Liability Insurance comes in.

It is worth noting that generally under such policies the organisation itself is not covered for the wrongful acts. This would generally be covered through the public liability insurance.

Property Insurance

This is similar to household property insurance and generally covers an organisation's physical contents against fire, storm damage, accidental damage or theft.

You can minimise the cost of this type of insurance by protecting your property with deadlocks, an alarm system, security lighting, security signage, etc. The longer it takes a potential burglar to enter your property, the less likely you are to suffer a break-in.

Depending on where your property is located you can also think about working with neighbours to provide out-of-hours protection. For example, you might share the cost of a security patrol with a neighbouring business.

Building Insurance

Building insurance covers your physical premises (offices, clubrooms) against events such as fire, storms and vandalism.

This insurance is generally not required if you do not own the facility (e.g. if you hire the facility or use council or crown land premises) because the owner will generally have their own insurance, but do check the lease or hire agreement.

Fraud (Fidelity) Insurance

Fidelity insurance covers your organisation against misappropriation of funds by employees or committee members.

You should consider the cost of this type of insurance, like any other type, in relation to your budget and the risk of misappropriation.

Personal Accident Insurance (Volunteer Insurance)

Personal accident insurance (or, as it is sometimes known, volunteer insurance) generally covers members, volunteers, officials or participants for any out-of-pocket expenses following accidental injury, disability or death while carrying out their work on behalf of the organisation.

It normally covers loss of income, too, if the injured person is unable to work as a result of the incident.

This is different from public liability insurance, which protects the organisation and volunteers against negligence involving third parties.

Professional Indemnity Insurance

Professional indemnity insurance covers individuals against claims for breach of "professional duty" arising out of any negligent act, error or omission committed or alleged to have been committed during the conduct of professional activities.

This insurance is particularly relevant for organisations involved in providing services such as health care, or those providing advisory services.

Travel Insurance

Much like a personal travel insurance policy, an organisational travel insurance policy covers the organisation against the risks involved in travel, both domestic and international.

Workers' Compensation

In almost all cases, a workers' compensation policy is compulsory for organisations that have paid employees. It covers expenses such as wages and medical bills if a person is injured at work.

It is your organisation's responsibility as an employer not only to have workers' compensation insurance, but also to maintain a safe workplace and protect yourself and your workers from financial hardship in the event of a workplace injury.

If you employ contractors, you should check to see whether your policy covers them too.

Cyber Liability Insurance

No matter how robust your information technology controls are, chances are you will not stop a hacker who is determined to infiltrate your systems. While you may not be able to prevent a cyber-attack, a cyber-insurance policy could assist in minimising the effect on your business.

Cyber policies generally cover direct losses suffered by your organisation, and also your liabilities to customers or other third parties arising from system breaches.

Investigating policies

No person can tell you definitively what type of insurance policy your organisation needs. You could take out every policy available and still not be covered for absolutely everything, or you could end up with woefully inadequate insurance coverage.

It's up to you to read what each policy offers, assess your organisation's risks and make a decision based on those assessments.

Once you've decided what type of policies you need, it's time to start getting some quotes. Ring around.

When comparing the quotes you have gathered, pay particular attention to:

- **the limit of cover** - how much does the policy cover you for?
- **excesses** - is there an excess payable if you make a claim? How much? Is the excess payable on each and every claim?
- **exclusions** - what is *not covered* by this policy? It could well be that the exclusions make the policy irrelevant to you.
- **the geographic scope of the cover** - does it cover you and your members/staff/volunteers when they are interstate or overseas? Do you need it to?

Be mindful that most policies will cover your organisation, members and volunteers only when they are undertaking authorised activities.

Always make sure you notify your insurer of any activities you wish to undertake outside of your normal operations, because they may not be covered or may require you to pay an additional premium. While this may not be great news for your group, it is preferable to attempting to make a claim and finding out that you are not covered.

It is important that you understand the procedure involved in making a claim under any policy. Generally, you are required to notify the insurer as soon as you become aware of an incident that might result in a claim. In addition, you should maintain an incident log and record all first aid treatments.

Cutting costs

If you require several different policies, try to package them together as it can lead to savings.

If you belong to a group that is associated with other similar groups, explore the possibilities of "pooling" your insurance needs. This will almost certainly lead to discounts.



VMSA RESOURCE SHEET

PRIVACY POLICY

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by board on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

Please note that this is a template policy for guidance only. For assistance in tailoring this policy to suit your organisation, or for legal advice at a pre-agreed price or training in this area, please do not hesitate to contact Moores to discuss how we can meet your needs. Please call the NFP-Assist Legal Hotline on (03) 9843 0418 or email to NFPassist@moores.com.au.

Introduction

The Board of [Name of Organisation] is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information which the organisation collects, holds and administers. Personal information is information which directly or indirectly identifies a person.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide a framework for [Name of Organisation] in dealing with privacy considerations.

Policy

[Name of Organisation] collects and administers a range of personal information for the purposes of [insert purposes]. The organisation is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information it collects, holds and administers.

[Name of Organisation] recognises the essential right of individuals to have their information administered in ways which they would reasonably expect – protected on one hand, and made accessible to them on the other. These privacy values are reflected in and supported by our core values and philosophies and also reflected in our Privacy Policy, which is compliant with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).

[Name of Organisation] is bound by laws which impose specific obligations when it comes to handling information. The organisation has adopted the following principles contained as minimum standards in relation to handling personal information.

[Name of Organisation] will

- Collect only information which the organisation requires for its primary function;
- Ensure that stakeholders are informed as to why we collect the information and how we administer the information gathered;
- Use and disclose personal information only for our primary functions or a directly related purpose, or for another purpose with the person's consent;
- Store personal information securely, protecting it from unauthorised access; and
- Provide stakeholders with access to their own information, and the right to seek its correction.

Authorisation

[Signature of Board Secretary]

[Date of approval by the Board]

[Name of Organisation]



VMSA RESOURCE SHEET

BOARD CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by board on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

Please note that this is a template policy for guidance only. For assistance in tailoring this policy to suit your organisation, or for legal advice at a pre-agreed price or training in this area, please do not hesitate to contact Moores to discuss how we can meet your needs. Please call the NFP-Assist Legal Hotline on (03) 9843 0418 or email to NFPassist@moores.com.au.

Introduction

Board confidentiality is important. It encourages open and frank discussion at meetings, helps facilitate the development of vision and the implementation of an effective strategy to achieve that vision, and protects information that is confidential, personal, or relates to employment, commercial or legal matters.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to facilitate effective governance of [Name of Organisation] by ensuring Board confidentiality.

Policy

Board members must keep confidential all information pertaining to matters dealt with by the Board. This includes board meeting minutes, agendas, reports to the Board and associated documents, and information contained in those documents.

The obligation to maintain confidentiality continues to apply even after a person has left the Board.

Maintaining confidentiality as a general rule will also help ensure observance by Board members of the following legal duty:

A person who obtains information because they are, or have been, a member of the Board must not improperly use the information to:

- *gain an advantage for themselves or someone else; or*
- *cause detriment to the organisation. .*

If a request is made for access to one or more Board Papers*, the Board may on a case by case basis resolve to provide access to the document/s. In considering this request, the Board will have regard to:

- the importance of maintaining confidentiality to facilitate effective board meetings;
- the importance of complying with the law – including privacy law - and recognizing that the law sometimes creates duties to disclose or protect information;
- whether the person requesting the document is a member, and the important role of members in holding the Board accountable; and
- the need to be consistent in the way that documents are treated, and the consequence of establishing any precedents or expectations.

Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent the Board from seeking confidential legal, accounting, financial or other expert advice from independent professionals to assist the Board in carrying out its functions.

Any person [such as CEO or Secretary] who is not a member of the Board but is present at a Board meeting (or part of a meeting) must maintain in confidence all information obtained as a result of their participation in the meeting.

Board Papers means all written communications to Board member/s including without limitation monthly/quarterly board papers, submissions, minutes, letters, memoranda, board committee and sub-committee papers and copies of other documents referred to in any of the abovementioned documents made available to the Board member as a Board member during his or her time in office.

Authorisation

<Signature of Board Secretary>

<Date of approval by the Board>

<Name of organisation>



VMSA FACT SHEET

Management Calendar of events

There are a many annual items that need to be looked at within the operations of a shed, these may include annual payments, or documents that may need to be reviewed, or checks that may need to occur on a regular basis.

This Calendar may look something like this:

January

- Shed closed until third Monday of the month
- 3rd Tuesday – Committee meeting
- Friday 26th Australia Day Public Holiday

February

- 3rd Tuesday – Committee meeting
- Insurance due 28th Feb if covered by AMSA

March

- Monday 12th March Labour Day Public Holiday
- 3rd Tuesday – Committee meeting
- Annual review of Policies and Procedures required
- Friday 30th March Good Friday Public Holiday

April

- Friday 30th March to – Sunday 15th – School Holidays
- Sunday 1st April Easter Sunday Public Holiday
- Monday 2nd April Easter Monday Public Holiday
- 3rd Tuesday – Committee meeting
- Wednesday 25th ANZAC day Public Holiday
- P O Box rental due

May

- 3rd Tuesday – Committee meeting
- Annual payment for Web Hosting and Domain Name registration

June

- Monday 11th June Queens Birthday Public Holiday
- Mens Health Week Monday 11th – Sunday 17th June
- 3rd Tuesday – Committee meeting
- Annual test & tagging of equipment required

July

- Saturday 30th June – Sunday 15th School Holidays
- 3rd Tuesday – Committee meeting
- Annual lease payment to council due / how long to go, talk to council to discuss extension
- AGM to be held within 5 months of end of Financial Year, confirm date of meeting- end of October and organise sub committee
- Arrange for financials to go to accountant /auditor

August

- 3rd Tuesday – Committee meeting
- Book AGM venue if required and organise sub committee
- Commence preparation of Annual report
- Contact dignitaries / guests to advise date of AGM

September

- Saturday 22nd – Sunday 7th October School Holidays
- 3rd Tuesday – Committee meeting
- Prepare AGM Notice and motions to be voted on, and committee nomination forms – must give minimum of 21 days prior notice not including day of AGM & day notice sent
- Prepare Annual report for printing
- Friday 28th AFL Day Public Holiday – TBC
- AFL Grand Final day lunch

October

- Senior Week – 7th – 14th October
- 3rd Tuesday – Committee meeting
- Bathurst 1000 luncheon
- AGM Confirmed last Friday of the month

November

- 3rd Tuesday – Committee meeting
- Tuesday 6th – Melbourne Cup Public Holiday
- Melbourne Cup luncheon
- Lodge annual report with consumer affairs – within 1 month of AGM

December

- 3rd Tuesday – Committee meeting
- Insurance fall due 28th Feb, review policy and coverage
- Update asset register to assist with Insurance requirements
- Review your Insurance policy to ensure coverage and limits are current and meet requirements
- Xmas break up party scheduled 3rd Friday of the month
- Saturday 22nd School Holidays begin

Other items that could be included are:

- Annual review of MOU / licence agreement
- Annual building maintenance report
- Annual asset register review / update / site equipment video
- Celebration of shed opening date or shed formation
- Recording of local festivals or local events
- Local Cluster meeting dates
- VMSA Gatherings dates
- Defibrillator check - Battery charge and condition of pads annually



VMSA RESOURCE SHEET

ASSET MANAGEMENT

The Victorian Men's Shed Association Inc. takes great care in collating and compiling these resources. The ultimate responsibility for the accuracy and appropriateness of the outcomes from the use of these resources lies with the user. The VMSA provides samples / examples of resources to assist sheds in developing tools specific to their needs. These documents are not templates and should be used in conjunction with any / all resources available that are specific to the requirements of the user.

What is asset management?

Asset management, broadly defined, refers to any system that monitors and maintains things of value to an entity or group. It may apply to both tangible [assets](#) (such as buildings) and to intangible [assets](#) (such as human capital, [intellectual property](#), [goodwill](#) and/or [financial assets](#)). Asset management is a systematic process of developing, operating, maintaining, upgrading, and disposing of assets cost-effectively.

What do we need to do?

A men's shed has a large variety of assets, these may include:

- tools, materials and equipment that have been donated
- tools, material and equipment that have been purchased
- office equipment such as computers, printers, software and networking equipment
- promotional equipment such as brochures, handouts, banners, marquees etc
- trailers, vehicles or buses

Asset management would mean that the shed has the necessary processes, procedures form and policies in place to properly manage their assets.

These may include the establishment of the following registers:

- a key, combination or password register – to record who has what keys, password accesses etc
- a donations register – detailing where the goods came from and an estimated value
- a purchase register – detailing when the items were purchased, and an estimated value
- an asset register – details full details of the item including model and serial numbers
- a loan register – to show who has borrowed any assets and when they were returned
- a committee member register – to show what assets a committee member has in his / her control. This may include a mobile phone or a computer

You would also have policies covering:

- asset purchasing
- asset maintenance
- asset loans
- asset disposal
- asset replacement

It would also involve having the necessary level of insurance cover to cover the cost of replacing your assets in the event of theft, break in, fire or total loss of your assets.



Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
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VMsa Resource Sheet

INDIGENOUS MEN IN MEN'S SHEDS

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
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INDIGENOUS MEN IN MEN'S SHEDS

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Introduction

INDIGENOUS MEN AND MEN'S SHEDS

The Victorian Men's Shed Association (VMsa) has a policy of inclusiveness and welcoming of all men within Men's Sheds irrespective of race, ethnic background, colour, age, religious belief, sexual orientation.

There is now a huge variety of Men's Sheds with a huge variety of men within these sheds.

Indigenous men have a history of gathering together regularly to enable peer support and group decision making. VMsa recognises that, just as some Men's Sheds cater predominately to groups of men from differing ethnic backgrounds, some sheds cater predominately for Indigenous men due to cultural preferences.

Within a welcoming and inclusive Men's Shed there is an opportunity to learn about, understand and respect differing cultures, to treat each other with respect and to support each other. The common ground being that we are all men!

VMsa would like to encourage Men's Sheds to take on board the following information regarding relating to Indigenous men and thus reduce the chances of inadvertently offending Indigenous men or others within the group.

TERMINOLOGY

The following is adapted from 'Communicating positively a guide to appropriate Indigenous terminology' (NSW Health).

An 'Indigenous person' is a person who:

- is a member of the Indigenous race of Australia
- identifies as an Indigenous person
- is accepted by the Indigenous community as an Indigenous person

Other Considerations

- the term 'Aborigine(s)' may have a negative connotation with many Indigenous people. The use of 'Indigenous person' or 'Indigenous people' is preferred
- do not use 'Indigenous' as a noun, use it as an adjective. 'Indigenous person' or 'Indigenous people' is preferred
- always capitalize 'Indigenous' just as we always capitalize 'Australian'
- never abbreviate the term 'Indigenous' as this is offensive

A Torres Strait Islander or a Torres Strait Islander person is a person/descendant from the Torres Strait Islands:

- always capitalize 'Torres Strait Islander'
- never abbreviate the term 'Torres Strait Islander' as this is offensive

Other Terms

Goori, Koori, Murri, Nunga, Yolngu, Anangu, Noongar etc are directly derived from Indigenous languages and are the names used by Indigenous people in specific areas when referring to themselves.

Always check with the local Indigenous community about using this type of terminology.

Terms not to be used

The following terms are inappropriate or dated and should be avoided, as it is offensive:

- ATSI
- Native
- Mixed blood
- Half caste
- Quarter caste
- Full blood
- Part Indigenous
- 25%, 50% Indigenous
- 'Them' and 'Them people'
- Those people
- Those folk
- You people

Clearly, the following terms are also offensive and should never be used:

- coloured
- primitive
- nigger
- lubra
- gin
- abo
- coon
- boong
- savage
- jacki jacki
- coconut
- sooty
- darky
- blacks

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

The following is adapted from *'Didja Know – Indigenous Cultural Communication' (Hunter New England Health*

HOW CAN I COMMUNICATE MORE EFFECTIVELY?

There is often confusion by shedders about relating to Indigenous people or what they should do in any given situation. The following information is provided to assist shedders to better understand the needs of Indigenous people to be culturally appropriate and to discredit some of the myths surrounding Indigenous people and their communities.

The following tips have come from oral history from a variety of Indigenous people. This list has been developed in response to some commonly asked questions. It is not a definitive list and will vary across different clans.

Handshakes

Non-Indigenous people may prefer a firm handshake, where a soft handshake from an Indigenous person may be more polite. This can indicate an unwillingness to intrude on personal space or not to shake hands (females).

Eye Contact

Western society expects others to 'hold eye contact' while speaking and assume those who don't, are shifty or not to be trusted. Indigenous people show respect for age or authority by lowering their eyes. Open eye contact can have connotations of sexual availability in many cultures.

Shame

The loss of personal dignity such as being singled out in front of others for criticism, praise or being ridiculed causes the person to suffer severe 'shame' (e.g. Re-education).

Please and Thank You

In traditional languages there appears to have been no words for 'please' or 'thank you'. Most traditional languages seem to have a particular 'respect code of language' to show respect or regard which includes such concepts as in the personal relationship/reciprocity system, one did things for others because it was expected, or a duty or because one wanted to do it.

Time orientation

Indigenous people are more likely to focus on the past and present than in the future. This means that what is happening now or what has occurred, tends to be of more interest and importance than plans or wondering about what will happen in the future. This can often produce a 'live for today attitude'.

Questioning

Indigenous people are more likely to respond to indirect questions. Very blunt or personal or direct questions may make Indigenous people suspicious of the reasons for the questioning. The amount of information shared often depends on the level of the relationship and commitment to that relationship.

Person Orientation

Indigenous people tend to be more 'people' oriented than 'task', 'information' or 'material goods' oriented. This means human relationships form the most important factor in all interactions.

Along with family loyalties or duties, personal relationships represent the over-riding concern in Indigenous societies.

Being raised in an extended nuclear family system, whose significant kinship categories go far beyond the nuclear family, reinforces this person's orientation. The 3 R's are very relevant to Indigenous society; Relationship, Respect and Responsibility.

If we translate this into an employment or training situation, this means that who is doing the training or supervising, is more important than the success of the content of what is being taught.

Field sensitivity

Indigenous people, are more likely to be what psychologists call 'field sensitive', that is, they tend more to be influenced by everything around them – family, friends, peers, colleagues, authority figures (including 'the boss', the environment, etc)

The individual tends to see him/herself more as part of a whole; so that removing an element from the wider field seems to change the whole field to such a person.

Individualism

Like people from all other ethnic groups, Indigenous peoples do not form a homogenous mass. Certain general characteristics can be discerned, of course, but they can never be assumed to apply invariably, and to the same extent, to every Indigenous individual.

As a matter of principle, an Indigenous person should be treated as an individual with individual needs and understandings and Indigenousity not seen as a stereotype.

Silence

This does not automatically mean Indigenous people have nothing to say. Long periods of silence and thought, characterise Indigenous meetings. Given time and trust, people do express their opinions.

Names

Names are much more than labels; they are part of a person and may have certain cultural taboos on their use in some traditional contexts.

CULTURAL AWARENESS

WHAT SHOULD I DO DIFFERENTLY WHEN I AM RELATING TO AN INDIGENOUS PERSON?

Like people from all other cultures, Indigenous people do not form a homogenous mass and therefore it should not be assumed that all Indigenous people are the same and what works for one works for all. Indigenous people should be treated no differently to non-Indigenous people.

There are several things you can do:

- respect Indigenous peoples, their culture and the diversity that exists within the culture
- remember that all Indigenous people are not the same. What may be appropriate for one may not be appropriate or relevant for another
- be prepared to take a little extra time and try to view things from a different perspective
- no Indigenous person has the right to speak for another unless requested to do so
- the less assertive you are the more frank an Indigenous person may be
- family and community responsibilities take priority over any other event and can create misunderstanding by others
- talk to many Indigenous people and learn about their individual thoughts on Indigenousity
- statements or actions regarding Indigenous issues should be taken to a number of Indigenous people before being implemented
- always ask open questions
- communication can be complex. To most people "yes" means yes but to Indigenous people "yes " may mean I'm going to say yes so that you can go away / I don't want to answer your questions
- similarly, difficulty in engaging with an Indigenous person may be due to the issue being seen as "Men's or Women's Business"
- some Indigenous people may have poor literacy levels and are distrustful of people asking questions – take this into account
- listen to what Indigenous people are saying

Contacts and Links

For further information and assistance please visit the Australian Human Rights Commission website: <http://www.humanrights.gov.au>



VMSEA RESOURCE SHEET

WHAT IS A CLUSTER?

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by board on	<<insert date>>
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What is a Cluster?

A cluster is a group of sheds that are located in a local area that wish to work together to provide shared learning opportunities, support and skills development, amongst the sheds.

Boundaries or borders such as local council borders or State and Territory borders do not define a cluster; the sheds and their willingness to work together define them.

There are cluster such as the Western District cluster, that has sheds located in Victoria and sheds located in South Australia, and the North East Cluster that has sheds located in Victoria and sheds located in New South Wales.

There are no limits on the number of sheds in a cluster, but it does need to be manageable within the means of the sheds within the cluster, taking into travel time, and number attending the meetings.

Objectives of a cluster

The objectives of a cluster are defined by the sheds that are members of the cluster, but generally include:

- To provide a forum for members to support one another and enhance information sharing and education
- To support the development of more effective services and programmes
- To act as a regular discussion forum for cluster members to enhance the strategies required for working as a shed and with the community, other organisations and funding bodies.
- To provide opportunities for professional development by inviting guest speakers to attend meetings and present topics of relevance and interest to the group.
- To correspond as appropriate on matters of importance or interest to the cluster
- To organise the acceptance and distribution of donations made to sheds in the cluster by larger donors
- To provide a discussion and feedback forum to the VMSEA.

Structure of a cluster

A cluster is an informal group of sheds; it is not a legal entity. It is not an incorporated association, it is not a company, nor is it a sub-committee of the State Association.

In many instances, a cluster may have a co-ordinator; this may be a local DHHS Officer, or a local council employee (Community Development Officer), or a person from one of the member sheds, who aids in the distribution of information to the cluster members.

The co-ordinator would assist with the sourcing of guest speakers, and would assist the host shed in locating speakers, and assist in the distribution of agenda's, previous minutes, and registration of attendees.

If there is no co-ordinator this work would be done by the shed that is hosting the event in conjunction with the shed that hosted the previous event.

How does a cluster operate?

The meeting of the cluster are generally held / hosted by a shed, and are rotated amongst the cluster members.

Cluster meet three or four times per annum, and the host shed, working with the coordinator provides details of the agenda, and past minutes, and arranges for the catering of the event.

This could be a simple morning tea or a basic BBQ lunch with salad, it does not need to be over the top.

Generally a small charge is paid by each attendee of \$5.00 - \$10.00 to assist in covering the cost of providing the catering.