



**New South Wales Branch, Australian Men's Shed  
Association Inc**  
**President's Communication Document No: 4 March 2025**  
**General Notes - Representative's Meeting, Newcastle**  
*This document is prepared to be shared with all Shedders*

**Please Note:** The following information is provided for all and includes reference to the Representatives' **General Committee Meeting** held at Newcastle NSW on Tuesday March 18, 2025. This document is not a copy of the minutes of the meeting but is a general record of some matters discussed and is presented for your consideration.

### **Present at the General Meeting**

Noel Frappell – **President** & Zone 09 Rep, Steve O'Brien – **Vice President** & Zone 10 Rep, Ian Tooke – **Secretary** & Zone 04 Rep, Alex Paton – **Treasurer** & Zone 3 Rep, Lou Busuttil – Zone 02 Rep, Mick O'Bryan - Zone 05 Rep, Len Keogh - Zone 06 Rep, Brian Durrant – Zone 7, Denis Chandler - Zone 08 Rep, Mathew Southworth – Zone 11 Rep, Tony Heeson – Zone 12 Rep, Allan Booth - Zone 13 Rep, Grant Gorton – Zone 14 Rep.

**Apologies:** Peter Quinane Zone 01 – Riverina.

Observing attendee: Beth Gow (AMSA Shed Support).

### **Meeting Opening**

The President opened the meeting at – 9.00am and welcomed all in attendance to Newcastle and spoke of the city's history, he also summarised the goals for the meeting.

As part of the opening, members were advised if they have a real or perceived Conflict of Interest with any of the business listed for the meeting they are to disclose it from the outset.

### **Notes re General Meeting**

#### **President's Report**

- President's Report was presented and discussed with the group, key matters of the Report are provided within this document.
- Mick O'Bryan Zone 05 Representative - West/North West was congratulated on his nomination for Trundle Citizen of the year. Well done Mick.

#### **Ongoing Matters**

- Two Zone Representative's positions remain vacant, currently, we have approximately 100 members without Representation. Our mission is to provide representation for all Shedders across our state and the ACT.
- Zone boundaries – Consideration is being given for an additional Representative to assist Mick O'Bryan in the North Eastern corner of Zone 05.
- Sydney Mardi Gras Community – We need to be inclusive, all are welcome at Men's Shed. Ongoing discussions are being conducted on how we may make this known amongst the Community. The Mardi Gras Parade group have their own workshop for the fabrication of tools and props. Possibly lacking in skills and tools, they might need help. Visited the Parade workshop and offered assistance with construction of props etc for their Annual Parade, Shed/Shedders choice if interested.



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- In recent times there have been several “break-ins” of sheds. Sheds are reminded to ensure security is adequate and all other preventive/ management processes are in place.

### **Zone Representative**

- The selection process is due later this year for odd numbered Zone Representatives. Anyone wishing to become a Zone Representative is encouraged to nominate. A nomination form is available through your shed. Any nomination must be supported by the nominee's shed and another shed. Upon receiving nominations, the executive committee will review them and select representatives for the next two years.
- Representatives are links to services, communities and to provide Shedder support.
- Succession planning and future roles for Representatives is an issue. It is preferred for some Zone Representatives to have an approved support person, this person may attend meetings and fill in if the Zone Representative is not available.

### **Research for the Ageing**

The University of New South Wales are gathering information into why the older generation are reluctant to participate in research.

As a result of their work, they hope to increase older male participation in research studies.

Our involvement (if at all) would involve Shedders to complete an anonymous online questionnaire.

Participants must: Be males aged 65 and above, able to understand, read and write in English, living in Australia.

### **Individual Shed Records**

Several members of the Committee are developing a software package to log sheds details within the ACT and NSW. In due course each shed will be requested to provide their details, this is for contact and record purposes. You are encouraged to support this program.

### **Shed opening times – Afternoons, Weekends?**

Some sheds are moving towards varying their opening times from the common 8.00 till 2.00. Varying opening times can be beneficial for the demographics that are not available at these times, eg students, shift workers, working men and women etc.

### **Email accounts**

We encourage sheds to establish a generic shed email account which several committee members can access rather than using personal emails of committee members.



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### **Bangalow Billy Cart Derby**

Other than local sheds around Bangalow, little interest has been shown across the state in attending the Derby. Sheds are encouraged to attend and it's not too late. Travel expenses may be a prohibiting factor.

### **Shed Contacts**

Shed Committees are reminded of the importance of your shed being contactable, this particularly applies to persons who may wish to contact your shed to join up. It is important your shed keep contact details up to date on the AMSA site. It is also important that the phone nominated is always available.

### **Report from Beth Gow**

Beth addressed the meeting and emphasised how she enjoyed her work in Men's Sheds. Her work includes promoting Men's Sheds to community and attending shed cluster meetings. Beth also provides support to sheds with their NSDP applications. She emphasised there is a concern over the number of sheds currently under threat of eviction and is working with Councils and community groups on this matter.

### **Bus Pods for the Homeless**

Len Keogh, Zone 6 Representative - Mid North Coast, is working with the Manning Homeless Action Group to provide a bus night refuge for the homeless. The bus is being altered to allow 16 sleeping pods assuring safety for the vulnerable. The bus is expected to be completed by June 2025.

### **Working with Children**

Enlight of the recent changes to Shed Insurances Policies, sheds are encouraged to review how any changes impact on working with children. If uncertain review your policy or refer to the FAQs of your insurance policy.

### **David Helmers – AMSA CEO**

During our meeting we were privileged to be joined by David Helmers, matters of interest David shared with us:

- The new AMSA office is located at 437 Hunter Street Newcastle. The office is within a Not for Profit HUB where groups of NFPs will be housed together and will support one another in their enterprises.
- A "Shedfest" activity is being planned for Thursday May 22, 2025 at Wallsend Diggers. A similar activity to a Cluster meeting, but from a wider base of sheds. The "Fest" is co-hosted by both AMSA and our NSW Branch. Attendance is limited to approximately 200, registrations on a first in first approved basis. Each Shed presentation at the Shedfest will be limited to 10 minutes per shed, strictly enforced.
- NSW Suicide Strategy – successful in gaining some funding this year with the hope of much more in the future.



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- We need to change or we will not encourage the next generation of shedders to share in the support and intervention offered to men through our sheds.
- Younger men have different life experiences that they can share with us.
- National Male Health Strategy – to continue to play a role we need to be adaptive and prepared to work with others in the field.
- What will we look like in 5, 10, 20 years?
- There are growing numbers of 55 + residential complexes being established in which there are sheds for their clients who have lots of living still to do. These are often closed gate communities.
- There are an increasing number of dual gender Community Based sheds.
- Need to provide both social as well as balanced activity bases

Thanks to David for making the time to join with us.

### **Our Meeting**

Apart from the meeting, representatives and guests participated enthusiastically in the social aspect of our get together. These interactions were invaluable for networking, exchanging ideas and fostering a sense of camaraderie. We look forward to getting together and sharing stories at our next Committee meeting in spring 2025.

It is proposed our next Committee Meeting will be held at the Nepean Shed on Tuesday August 19, 2025, this is subject to Nepean Shed Committee approval.

### **Finally**

#### **Congratulations to Dennis Lowder, Wee Waa Shedder and Public Officer.**

On the 26<sup>th</sup> January, 2025 Dennis was awarded the: **Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM)** for service to veterans, and the community of Wee Waa.

Well done Dennis

*Noel Frappell*

Noel Frappell

President: NSW Branch AMSA Inc

22/03/2025