

TASS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday 25 March 2025

- Venue:** Motor Yacht Club of Tasmania (MYCT)
1 Ford Parade, Lindisfarne
(Access from East Derwent Highway, via Lincoln Street and Park Road)
Parking is available at the MYCT or on the street.
- Time:** 1:30pm to 4:00pm (including afternoon tea)
- Guest Speaker:** **Ms Brigid Wilkinson, CEO, Council on the Ageing Tasmania (COTA)**
Brigid will be discussing the work of COTA, its programs and advocacy work, as well as providing an update on the Tasmanian Government's Older Tasmanians Action Plan 2025 - 2030.
- RSVP:** By 5:00pm Thursday 20 March 2025 to John Chalmers,
0448 731 845, or secretary@tass.org.au

AGM Agenda

- Apologies
- Minutes of the 2024 AGM
- President's Report
- Financial Report
- Election of Office Bearers – all positions will be declared vacant
- Election of Legal Advisor
- Membership Subscriptions for 2026

Nominations close 5:00pm, Thursday 20 March 2025. Nomination Form included in this newsletter.

- RSVP:** By 5:00pm Thursday 20 March 2025 to John Chalmers,
0448 731 845, or secretary@tass.org.au
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President's Report February 2025

As I am writing this the Reserve Bank announced a 0.25% cut in interest rates and the general feeling is that we will be going to an election sooner rather than later. *(As an aside on Monday I received my latest bill for household insurance which shows a 21% increase! So much for cost of living relief.)*

In anticipation of the upcoming election, which must be held before the end of May, members of the executive have been reviewing our on-going campaign to remove the 10% Cap which unfairly restricts the Age Pension entitlement of RBF members.

I had hoped we would not be going into another electoral cycle seeking that the *Social Services Legislation Amendment (Defined benefit Income Streams) Act 2015* (the 10% Cap legislation) which was introduced by the previous Liberal Government be either repealed or amended. Prior to the last election we had received strong support from Tasmanian Labor members of the Commonwealth Parliament for a review of this legislation which impacts most harshly and unfairly on those with low retirement incomes.

However, no change has been forthcoming during the term of the current Government.

The Tasmanian Association of State Superannuants Inc (TASS) has clearly demonstrated that this legislation is not achieving the aims outlined by Scott Morrison when he was Minister for Social Security. We have demonstrated on repeated occasions that the claims made by successive Social Security Ministers are false and do not justify the 10% cap. This cap has the greatest impact on low income retirees.

Even during the term of the current Government, the claim made by the Minister, in a response to Senator Wendy Askew, for why this legislation was introduced are false. The claim made by Minister Rishworth that:

The Better Super package had the unintended result of shifting a significant amount of employer funded contributions into the employee component for the purposes of calculating the deductible amount for some people. This reduced their assessable income, and in many cases significantly increased their level of income support, even though there was no change in their circumstances

is totally inconsistent with information provided to TASS by the Retirement Benefits Fund (RBF). RBF has clearly stated that no employer contributions have been included in these calculations.

Our lobbying efforts have made me wonder what evidence do our politicians need if we are to get them to realise their actions are hurting those most in need? I wonder why most seem blind to the suffering they have inflicted on a large number of retired Tasmanians who gave their life to public service? I wonder why the majority of our elected members simply ignore the information TASS has provided them highlighting the need for legislative change.

There are exceptions though, and I give a shout out to those who have been most vocal in their support. Andrew Wilkie continues to offer us strong support. And Senator Wendy Askew has also written to the Minister on our behalf.

And this has led me to wonder about the social compact between the community and our political leaders.

While TASS has been lobbying to improve the well-being of those on low incomes, at the same time we have seen extensive lobbying from others to over-turn efforts by the Government to better target the tax concessions applying to high value superannuation accounts. These accounts, which hold in excess of \$3 million in assets, receive tax concessions which will frequently exceed the value of the full Age Pension.

(Another aside, this legislation also seeks to target those retired public servants who receive significant Defined Benefit (DB) income streams. However, in targeting these particular public servants the proposed legislation takes no account of the fact that they do not benefit from superannuation tax concessions, and they pay full income tax on their income. The proposed legislation also has the unfortunate effect of taxing women at a higher rate than men, given the same level of DB income.)

At the top end there are over 250 individual Australians who hold more than \$100 million in their superannuation account. The tax concession received by each of these individuals amounts to around

\$2 million per annum. That totals around half a billion dollars per annum of support every year to those who have somehow been able to accumulate \$100 million or more in their super!

You have read that correctly. While most members of our Commonwealth Parliament are blind to the impact that the 10% cap legislation is having on retirees at the lowest end of the income spectrum, these very same politicians support giving tax concessions worth \$2 million per year to some of the wealthiest Australians.

Surely this is a breach of the community's social compact with those governing us!

Surely there is some point where all Australians must agree that enough is enough.

Surely there is a point where wealthy older Australians do not need support from the public purse in retirement, whether that support comes via the Age Pension or via superannuation tax concessions.

To put this in context, the vast majority of Australians currently have less than \$500,000 in their super and the 2023 Intergenerational Report estimates that at least 60% of retirees will still be dependent on a full or part Age Pension in 2060.

At the lower end of the wealth scale access to the Age Pension is governed by strong means testing. Under the income test older Australians lose 50 cents of Age Pension for each extra dollar of income they receive above a given amount. This is an effective marginal tax rate well above that applying to those on even the highest incomes in Australia and severely restricts their access to employment!

And the assets test imposes even higher effective marginal tax rates. The asset test imposes an effective marginal tax rate of 100% on an assumed earnings rate of 7.8%. And the assets assessed include your car and your household belongings!

You won't see this figure on the Department of Social Services (DSS) website. They will tell you that for every \$1000 of assessable assets you hold above the minimum your Age Pension will be reduced by \$3 per fortnight. This sounds like a small amount. But it amounts to \$78 per year. And that equates to an assumed earnings rate of 7.8% on that \$1000 of assets.

But those retirees that have sufficient assets to be ineligible for the Age Pension have no means testing applied to the superannuation tax concessions received. And unlike the superannuation we receive from RBF, there is no tax paid on the income earned on superannuation investments up to \$1.9 million or other income up to \$18,200.

Again, I wonder where the social compact has gone!

Our political leaders seem to support harsh restrictions on the support retirees receive via the Age Pension, and at the same time seem to accept open ended support for retirees who gain their benefit via income tax concessions.

But the apparent breakdown in the social compact for older Australians does not stop here.

Since the 10% cap legislation was introduced, resulting in a loss of Age Pension for many low income retirees on RBF superannuation, our Commonwealth politicians have supported legislation that permits those who buy a tax exempt lifetime income stream with their superannuation to offset 40% of that income stream when assessing their eligibility for the Age Pension.

Again, it seems incredulous that most politicians think it is appropriate that one group of retirees can offset 40% of their full tax exempt income stream, while another group has been severely constrained in how much of a taxed retirement income stream can be offset.

Why do some retirees gain preferential access to the Age Pension, while others are constrained for completely unjustifiable reasons?

Why do many of our politicians seem to disregard the social compact which for generations has sought to preference those in most need.

Why do many of those we elect appear to turn a deaf ear to the information provided by TASS that shows the application of the 10% cap to members of RBF to be totally unjustified.

Why during a period of high inflation do most of our elected members sit by while retired public servants are punished for being members of a superannuation scheme which was a compulsory part of their employment contract, and where they are unable to make any changes to their retirement income arrangements as the rules made in Canberra change.

Yes, I am angry.

Yes, I am frustrated!

And hopefully you will share this column widely with those seeking to be elected at the forthcoming election.

I encourage you to ask them why we don't seem to count! Ask them to act and change this unfair and unjustified legislation. Ask them why those in Canberra are allowing the social compact to be eroded. And ask them to put their support in writing.

The unjust and harsh changes introduced in 2016 by the previous Liberal Government and now supported through the term of the current Government do not achieve their stated aim and have resulted in undue hardship for those most in need.

The incoming Government in Canberra must act and reverse the decline in Australia's social compact.

So, speak up and demand change as we go to the polls. Elsewhere in this edition of SuperNews (**page 8**) you will see a copy of the correspondence TASS has sent to all our current members of Parliament in Tasmania and to all of those who are seeking election. Again, share this widely.

John Pauley

President

Tasmanian Association of State Superannuants Inc



The advertisement is split into two main sections. On the left, a dark blue curved background contains the 'Mobility4All' logo, which consists of two interlocking circles in orange and white. Below the logo, the text 'INDEPENDENT LIVING + MOBILITY' is written in white, followed by the address '23 Derwent Park Road, Derwent Park', the phone number 'Ph (03) 6273 8300' and email 'info@mobility4all.com.au', and the website 'www.mobility4all.com.au' in orange. On the right, a photograph shows a red four-wheeled mobility scooter with a black seat, handlebars, and a front basket, parked on a paved area with trees in the background under a blue sky.

TASS Inc Income and Expenditure Statement

For the year 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024

INCOME	2024	2023
Membership Subscriptions	\$ 6,830.00	\$ 7,045.00
Donations	1,207.00	1,840.00
Interest	2,990.29	2,276.71
Sponsorship	600.00	-
50 th Anniversary Luncheon	680.00	-
TOTAL INCOME	\$12,307.29	\$11,161.71
LESS EXPENDITURE		
Affiliations	150.00	225.00
Annual Return	71.20	68.00
Depreciation – Laptop Computer	-	756.00
Email	629.79	321.86
Functions	2,654.35	1,720.98
Insurance	449.90	449.90
Internet	110.70	162.65
Miscellaneous	49.25	5.00
Office	1,481.57	971.41
Phone	87.50	-
Postage	1,099.78	1,143.03
Super-News	6,242.36	6,278.18
Travel	525.00	450.00
Zoom	-	93.90
50 th Anniversary Luncheon	1,110.00	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	\$14,661.40	\$12,645.91
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) FOR YEAR	\$(2,354.11)	\$(1,484.20)

TASS Inc Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2024

ACCUMULATED FUNDS	2024	2023
Association Funds B/f 1/1/24	\$58,583.80	\$60,068.00
Less Surplus / (Deficit) for Year	<u>(2,354.11)</u>	(1,484.20)
Association Funds C/f 31/12/24	\$56,229.69	\$58,583.80

Represented by:

ASSETS

Current Assets

Cash at Bank (MyState)	\$ 3,055.53	\$ 7,892.24
Accrued Interest	2,739.23	2,225.60
Prepayment	-	497.50

Investment

Term Deposit (MyState)	63,504.68	63,504.02
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Non-Current Asset

Laptop Computer	-	1,512.00
Less Provision for Depreciation	-	(1,512.00)

TOTAL ASSETS	\$69,299.44	\$74,119.36
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LESS LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable	\$ 64.75	115.56
Deferred Membership Income:		
Membership Subscriptions 2025+	1,950.00	3,105.00
Members for Life	11,055.00	12,315.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$13,069.75	\$15,535.56

NET ASSETS	\$56,229.69	\$58,583.80
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COMMITTEE REPORT:

These Financial Statements present fairly the financial position of the Tasmanian Association of State Superannuants Inc and the results of its operations for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Michael Walker CPA
Treasurer
Dated: 31 January 2025

John Pauley
President

Explanatory notes to TASS Financial Statements

Member Subscriptions 2024: In line with reduction in memberships.

Interest: Paid at 4.8% in 2024. There will be a small reduction in 2025.

Sponsorship: 12 month contract with Mobility4All/Stairlift Tasmania.

Depreciation: New laptop written off over standard 2 years.

Functions: Increase in expenditure due to cost of Launceston facility hire and catering.

Office: Mainly printing and stationery items.

Accrued Interest: Interest earned but not received at balance date.

Term Deposit (MyState): Matures on 6 February 2025. \$60,000 will be re-invested on that date.

Accounts Payable: Expense incurred and included under Expenditure but not paid until after balance date.

Membership Subscriptions 2025+: Subscriptions received in 2024 for 2025 and beyond.

Members for Life: Subscriptions received to be allocated over 8 years.

The financial statements will be submitted for approval at the TASS Annual General Meeting by the Treasurer. There will be opportunities to ask questions at this meeting.

Generous donations to TASS

Each year on the TASS Membership Application / Renewal form, people are provided with an opportunity to supplement their membership fee with an optional donation if they wish.

These optional donations have proven to be beneficial in assisting TASS to balance its books while “running a tight financial ship”.

We would like to recognise this generosity again, by saying thank you to all those members who make a donation along with their membership fee. It is much appreciated by the TASS Executive.

Michael Walker CPA

TASS Treasurer

MEMBERSHIP OFFICER’S REPORT FOR 2024

TASS membership as at 31/12/2024 totals 727 (down 41 on last year)

The membership consists of:	2024	2023
• Couples (263 x 2)	526	560
• Single Superannuants	103	109
• Widow/Widower of a Superannuant	98	99

During the year 2024, ten (10) new members joined the Tasmanian Association of State Superannuants Inc (TASS).

The Association seeks your assistance in recruiting new members where possible to ensure that our numbers maintain a level sufficient to remain a strong and viable Association. The website, www.tass.org.au, provides updates on recent topics of interest to our members and also has application forms which can be completed online if preferred.

The cost of membership is minimal, \$15.00 p.a. for a Superannuant (or Couple) and \$10.00 p.a. for the Widow/Widower of a Superannuant.

During 2019 the Association introduced a Membership for Life, a one-off payment of \$120.00 for a Superannuant (or Couple) and \$80.00 for the Widow/Widower of a Superannuant. The number of members that have taken up this option now totals 186.

Those members who have not yet renewed their membership for 2025 please take this opportunity to do so, as your continued support is eagerly sought.

Refer to the above website, click on Membership and select "Download Application Forms".

Charles Thomas
Membership Officer

N.B. On 5 February 2025 a payment of \$15 was deposited to the TASS MyState account from John B Smith. The TASS database does not have anyone of that name recorded. Did anyone ask this person to make payment on their behalf? If you did, please let the Membership Officer know either by text to 0422 414 861 or email info@tass.org.au.

This may also be a new member, however, no paperwork has been received to date. If you know this person, please prompt them to make contact. Thank you.

Letter from TASS to all sitting Tasmanian Commonwealth parliamentarians and those seeking election at the forthcoming election.

Correspondence was sent on 18 February 2025 to all sitting Tasmanian Commonwealth Parliamentarians and those seeking election at the forthcoming election.

Dear

Exemption for RBF Members from the "10% Cap" Legislation

Prior to the 2022 election members of the Retirement Benefits Fund (RBF) were buoyed by the support Tasmanian Labor members of the Commonwealth Parliament had shown to undertake a review of the *Social Services Legislation Amendment (Defined Benefit Income Streams) Act 2015* (the 10% Cap legislation) introduced by the previous Liberal Government. Such a review would have had the aim of removing the harsh and unfair impact this legislation has had on a large number of retirees in Tasmania, some who had seen their income drop by as much as 10%.

Unfortunately, over the last three years the Labor Government has failed to address the inequities of this legislation at a time when retirees are suffering greatly from the effects of inflation.

With an election due before the end of May 2025, TASS is seeking your written support to have the Retirement Benefits Fund (RBF) exempted from this legislation. The legislation already exempts retired members of the military.

TASS has clearly shown that the initial premise for this legislation was false. Data provided by the Commonwealth Government, has subsequently shown that the biggest impact of this legislation falls upon the poorest cohort of superannuants.

And during the period of the current government, Minister Rishworth, in responding to a query from Senator Askew on 10 February 2023, has provided information highlighting that the fundamental underpinnings behind this legislation are totally flawed when considering the superannuation arrangements of RBF members.

In that correspondence the Minister stated:

The Better Super package had the unintended result of shifting a significant amount of employer funded contributions into the employee component for the purposes of calculating the deductible amount for some people. This reduced their assessable income, and in many cases

significantly increased their level of income support, even though there was no change in their circumstances.

As a result, the Minister concluded that:

The Tasmanian Retirement Benefits Fund has the characteristics of a defined benefit scheme. As such it is appropriate it is covered by this change.

It is unfortunate that it has taken so long for the Commonwealth Government to provide such a clear explanation for this legislation.

Regrettably, the Minister has misunderstood how the RBF scheme operates. Correspondence, received by TASS from RBF, clearly indicates that in response to the Better Super package **no** employer funded contributions were applied to the employee component of superannuation received by RBF members.

Given the on-going commitments we have received over the past decade from various Tasmanian members of the Commonwealth Parliament I had hoped that there would be no need to raise the issue of the 10% Cap legislation as we move into yet another election cycle.

However, many retirees in receipt of RBF superannuation continue to suffer greatly from this inequitable and unfair legislation and it is extremely disappointing that our collective representatives in Canberra have been unable to take any actions to remove this unjust impost which has made their retirement more difficult than it should have been.

I now seek that each and every member of the forthcoming Parliament who is representing Tasmanians will commit to gaining an exemption for RBF members and support those retirees who have suffered unnecessary hardship as a result of this legislation.

I trust that you will find the compassion to provide written support to this request on behalf of those who face ever increasing financial difficulties and act strongly in the next Parliament to implement an exemption for RBF members from the *Social Services Legislation Amendment (Defined benefit Income Streams) Act 2015*.

Should you wish to discuss this issue further with us please do not hesitate to contact me either by email or phone.

Regards

John Pauley,
President, TASS

E: john@pauley.com.au M: 0415 287 115

Election of Office Bearers AGM 25 March 2025

Nominations from financial members of the Tasmanian Association of State Superannuants Inc are invited for election to the Executive for 2025 to be held at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Tuesday 25 March 2025. (Nomination form enclosed). **Nominations close at 5:00pm Thursday 20 March 2025**

All positions of Office Bearers are declared vacant at the AGM and nominations for the following positions are invited:

- President
 - Vice-President
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Membership Officer
 - Newsletter Editor
 - Plus – up to an additional six (6) Executive members
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Minutes of the 2024 AGM held on 19 March 2024 at the Motor Yacht Club 1 Ford Parade, Lindisfarne, commencing at 1:30pm

Attendees: Paul Plummer, Lyn Smith, George Smith, Braithed Wedd, Don Dobie, Derek Walter, Lynette Dean, David Louez, Francesca Ferraro, Pam Mason, Geoff Mason, Tony Coupe, Louise Wilson, Maurice French, Lyn Scott, Jeanette Garlic, Randall Hall, Susan Harper, Geoffrey Harper, Tim Swift, Tony Naughton, Cecil Wright, Murray Harper, John Chalmers, Mike Walker, Charles Thomas, Jeneane Thomas, Jean Walker, Stephen Graetzer, Ross Brown, Ross Butler, Chris Scott, Jeff Garsed.

Apologies: John Pauley, June Hazzlewood, Barbara Wesley OAM, Sue Kremer, Denise Bower, Paul Crew, Barbara Bowes, Caroline Dwyer, Hayden Dwyer, Nanette Jaksic.

Item heading	Issue / Discussion	Decision
Guest Speaker 2:00-3:15pm	Guest Speaker: Detective Sergeant Paul Turner, Tasmania Police. Cyber scams, staying safe online, scams to look out for. Paul was accompanied by Commander Troy Morrisby. Paul spoke mainly about investment scams, with a couple of local examples. He welcomed questions, so other scam topics were raised. He sees scams as fraud.	The meeting showed its appreciation in the usual manner.
1.Apologies	As noted above	
2 Confirmation of previous AGM minutes	Minutes of previous AGM dated 21/3/23 were endorsed.	Endorsed. Moved: John Chalmers Seconded: Randall Hall Carried
3 President's Report	John Pauley was a late apology. Murray Harper referred members to the Report in the March Super-News.	Received. Moved: Ross Butler Seconded: John Chalmers. Carried
4 Treasurer's Report	The Income and Expenditure Statement for the year to December 31st, 2023, and the Balance Sheet as of 31 st December were tabled and are attached. As per Section 12.2 of our Constitution, the Annual Subscription Rates for our next financial year are: Superannuant/Couple - \$15.00; Widow/Widower/Bereaved Partner of Superannuant - \$10.00; purchase of Membership for Life – Superannuant - \$120; Widow/Widower/Bereaved Partner of Superannuant - \$80. The Statement and Balance Sheet for the 2023 Calendar Year present fairly the financial position of TASS and the results of its operations for the year concerned. (Members were also referred to the Report in the March Super-News)	Report received and adopted. Moved: Mike Walker Seconded: Jeff Garsed Carried That the Annual Subscription Rates remain unchanged: Moved: Mike Walker Seconded: Charles Thomas Carried

6 Election of Office Bearers.	All positions declared vacant. Nominations were received for the positions of:	
	President: Nominated: John Pauley	John Pauley was duly elected
	Vice-President: Nominated: Murray Harper	Murray Harper was duly elected
	Secretary: Nominated: John Chalmers	John Chalmers was duly elected
	Treasurer: Nominated: Mike Walker	Mike Walker was duly elected
	Membership Officer: Nominated: Charles Thomas	Charles Thomas was duly elected
	<i>Super-News</i> Editor: Nominated: Jeneane Thomas	Jeneane Thomas was duly elected
	The motion to accept and approve collectively the nominations for the above positions was agreed to.	Moved: Ross Butler Seconded: Randall Hall Carried
	Exec members: (6 vacancies) Nominated: Ross Brown, Jeff Garsed, Stephen Graetzer, Christopher Scott, Jean Walker Nominations from the Floor: David Louez (nominated by Ross Brown, seconded by Charles Thomas).	Ross Brown, Jeff Garsed, Stephen Graetzer, Christopher Scott, Jean Walker and David Louez were elected.
7 Appointment of Legal Advisor	The appointment of a Legal Advisor is yet to be confirmed. Charles Thomas advised that a lawyer from the Wallace Wilkinson and Webster would be appointed for the position. Since the AGM, TASS has been advised that Mr William Justo will act as our Legal Advisor.	Charles Thomas
8.General Business	There was none.	
AGM Closed 2:02PM	Afternoon Tea was served after the Guest Presentation.	

Minutes Endorsed	President: John Pauley	Date:
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Useful contacts for TASS Members:

Retirement Benefits Fund (RBF)

All enquiries 1800-622-631
Website www.rbf.com.au

Australian Taxation Office (ATO)

Personal taxation information 13 28 61
Website www.ato.gov.au

Services Australia

(Access Centrelink and Medicare services)

Older Australians and Financial Information Services 132 300
Disability, Sickness and Carers 132 717
Website www.servicesaustralia.gov.au

TASS Executive – Administration:

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E-mail: info@tass.org.au
Phone: 0448 731 845
Website: www.tass.org.au
Facebook page: www.facebook.com/TASSTasmania
President: John Pauley Ph: 0415 287 115
Vice President: Murray Harper Ph: 0408 487 527
Secretary & Public Officer: John Chalmers Ph: 0409 491 245
Treasurer: Mike Walker Ph: 0428 376 741
Membership Officer: Charles Thomas Ph: 0422 414 861
Super-News Editor: Jeneane Thomas Ph: 0408 485 902

Other Committee Members:

Jean Walker, Stephen Graetzer, Ross Brown, Chris Scott, Jeff Garsed, David Louez

Northern Tasmania Representative: Vacant

North-West Tasmania Representative: Donald Wells Ph: 0428 415 852

Change of Address/or Email address:

Should you change your address and/or email details please advise the **Membership Officer, Charles Thomas**, so that he can update our records. Phone: 0422 414 861 or info@tass.org.au

DISCLAIMER

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