



TMSA Member Sheds and
Members of TMSA Member Sheds

15th June 2019

Subject: **The Facts**

You may have heard recent discussions on radio about gender diversity within men's sheds. Unfortunately, the information propagated was incorrect and has led to misleading conjecture and information being disseminated amongst sheds and the general public.

The facts are:

1. TMSA has been completely misrepresented by persons not knowing the facts.
2. TMSA has a special condition within its grant deed with the Department of Communities Tasmania, to "*make reasonable efforts to achieve a gender balance (being at least one third male representation and at least one third female representation) on its board of management during the Funding Period*".

This requirement only applies to TMSA and **does not apply to any shed**.

3. TMSA does not have a policy on how sheds should organise their committee and is not aware of any policy external of TMSA, that does stipulate the need for gender diversity.
4. TMSA has no control over, nor authority, on the composition or organisational structure of any shed. Each shed decides the make-up of their Committee for themselves, without instructions or directions from TMSA.

Sheds, their members and the general public have been distressed and concerned through the misrepresentation and conjecture as much as TMSA has been.

In the past, TMSA has had a female Treasurer and a female Area Representative on the Committee, both of whom worked for the betterment of TMSA Member Sheds, in the way we expect all of our Committee and representatives to represent us. We currently engage a female Executive Officer, whose appointment was based on skills and qualifications from a range of applicants from both within the State and the mainland. The appointment is not as a Committee Member and was not made to meet the above-referenced special condition within our grant deed.

The purpose and function of TMSA is to support and promote sheds, not to dictate what each shed should or should not do. TMSA is available to provide advice and encouragement in accordance with our objects, as provided in our Rules of Association, which can be viewed by all and sundry on our web site.

With regards to the misconception on grants, there has never been a condition for a shed to qualify for a TMSA grant, that requires them to have gender diversity. TMSA is unaware of any other organisation that requires gender diversity as a prerequisite to applying for a grant.

In closing, I would strongly urge you to 'set the record straight' within your Men's Shed as this kind of incorrect messaging is damaging to us all.

Michael Dennis
President
Tasmanian Men's Shed Association
Peak Body for Tasmanian Men's Sheds