

**MINUTES OF INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE VOLUNTEER  
AMBULANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF TASMANIA, INCORPORATED  
Held at Tarraleah, 30/3/96**

Meeting opened at 1010 hours.

Convener Colin Dell (Tasman) welcomed all VAOs to the meeting. He was elected to be Chairman for the meeting.

Margaret Dennis (Rossarden) and Robyn Dell (Tasman) were elected to be minutes takers.

APOLOGIES: Ouse, Georgetown, Kingston, St. Marys, Bruny, Glenn Aslin - Campbell Town BSO, Jim Griffin - Launceston, Dover, Maydena, Scottsdale, Savage River, Leanne Stubbs - Beaconsfield.

Colin outlined the proposed agenda for the day, and invited further contributions to the agenda.

All present were then invited to introduce themselves to tell the meeting which Group they belong to, how many VAOs, any trainees and whether or not they work with salaried officers.

- Tim McKinlay - Tasman - 13 VAOs - possibly 6 trainees (awaiting confirmation) - 2 trucks - no AO.
- Howard Fox - Campbell Town - 8 VAOs - 2 trainees - salaried officers - good relationship with all groups in the area.
- Kath Kennedy - Campbell Town
- John Prewer - Wynyard/Burnie - mixed relationships with salaried officers.
- Graeme Eddy - St. Helens.
- Ron Stone - St. Helens - 14 VAOs - 4 trainees - 2 trucks - salaried officers for 3 months yearly when VAOs get less work.
- Wayne Doran - Bothwell - 11 VAOs - 2 trainees - training is a problem. Fund raising for equipment has been very successful.
- Judi Turner - Bothwell
- Jim Giffard - Dunalley - Paramedic who also works as VAO.
- Roger Garth - Dunalley - 12 VAOs - 2 of whom are also salaried officers in Hobart - inadequate building.
- Alan Lloyd - Bridgewater - 16 VAOs - 2 salaried officers - running well.
- Chris Holloway - Coles Bay.
- Glenn Peters - Tullah.
- Colleen Moore - Zeehan - 12 VAOs - runs well, very few problems - part of larger West Coast Volunteer Association covering Zeehan, Rosebery, Tullah, Strahan, Queenstown. West Coast has 70 VAOs.
- Bill DeKaste - Tullah - 9 VAOs good relationship within local area.
- Trevor Glover-Smith - Ulverstone - 20 VAOs do not transport - act as 1st response and have back-up from Devonport or Burnie.
- Wade Goodwin - Ulverstone
- David Fahey - Wynyard/Burnie - 28 VAOs - new building being constructed - problems with some salaried officers.
- Kris Fyle - Ulverstone - a few problems.
- Colin Partridge - Deloraine.
- Sally Carter - Beaconsfield.
- Robert Lee - Deloraine - 13 VAOs - salaried officers, one of whom is a problem.

- Lorraine Gardiner - Beaconsfield - 20 VAOs - some problems but group is working well. Includes Beauty Point.
- Kevin Jones - Miena - 14 VAOs - because of the scattered area covered local knowledge is important, due to the lack of signage and street names.
- Cheryl Wilson - Tarraleah - 8 VAOs - trainee - training is the main problem - aim is to get a combined emergency services building.
- Jim Morris - Swansea - 16 VAOs (not all active) - independent service owned by the Community and run by Council - relationships with salaried officers is OK.
- Margaret Dennis - Rossarden - 4 VAOs (2 only work 10 hours per week) - small group - low case load - good relationship with Campbell Town - radio reception poor to non-existent at times.
- Robyn Dell - Tasman - has seen vast improvement in conditions for VAOs over the years but still room for improvement.
- Colin Dell - Tasman
- Judy Bradford - Oatlands - run by Council.

The meeting was then opened for general discussion:

- Jim Morris told us of problems they have with TAS Administration.
- Ron Stone said St Helens train monthly.
- John Prewer said Ulverstone is manned by salaried officers daytime and VAOs at night, There is often a delay in response for transport at Ulverstone during the night.
- Howard Fox - their BSOs (Branch Station Officers) are fully supportive of our Association. Glen Aslin is ex Northern Territory officer and has some good "new" ideas. A list of comments and suggestions was handed to the Interim chairman for perusal.
- Jim Giffard asked if Dodges Ferry Group (St John) had been invited to meeting. Colin Dell replied that he has discussed it with Helen Ling and they were not interested (nothing to do with TAS).
- Comments from L'ton salaried officers - "This should have happened years ago."
- Colin Dell feels that the Association should cover all VAOs regardless of their affiliation.

Discussion then moved on to Constitution. John Prewer stressed the importance of a constitution to enable us to keep operating as an Association. Colin Dell had six copies of a sample constitution for perusal by representatives.

Suggestions for Association name was invited:

- Volunteer Ambulance Association of Tas. Inc.
- Tasmanian Volunteer Ambulance Association.
- Volunteer Ambulance Officers Association of Tasmania Incorporated.

Moved John Prewer, seconded Roger Garth that we accept option 3 for our name - carried. The word "Officer" must be included in the title to give the VAOs the respect they deserve, and the title makes it clear who we are.

David Fahey asked for clarification of Constitution. Colin replied by asking if we should divide into zones for meeting and discussions of Constitution and then meet state-wide once or twice yearly because of our far flung population/representation.

- Suggestion - some people considered that it. should remain a state-wide body with no zones.
- Some concerns may apply to particular areas only and need to be considered in that area only.
- Next meeting should be state-wide to actually adopt a formal constitution.
- West Coast do not want to lose their own identity and prefer the Association to be state-wide.

- Should have committees from regions.
- Forum for discussion re set up of body.
- Appointment of sub-committee for constitution discussions.
- State-wide Assn but with reps from different areas.
- Assn is for Volunteers as individuals.
- State body avoids cliques and should be open for all.
- Travelling will have to be accepted as part of State body.
- Setting up Assn is the easy part, the big task is to convince VAOs that it is a good thing (some VAOs do not want to “rock the boat” or put salaried officers off-side).
- Concern that we do not set up a union.
- What we want is respect. and some basic rights.
- Assn does not want to jeopardise current good relationships but rather bring other groups up to the same standard.
- Suggestion that 2-3 people work on a statement for the Press, to be announced later at this meeting.
- West Coast should keep their current body and be an affiliated member of the Association.
- VAO coordinators have previously met for forums. In some areas this has folded.
- Maybe VAOs should be reps instead of coordinators.
- Should be a state-wide body (not a committee).
- VAOs may wish to attend meetings as well as coordinators.

#### Recommendation

- That we have a State Meeting
- Individual membership
- Meetings open to all VAOs
- Proxy votes from financial VAOs if not attending
- That we have:
  - Chair/Public Officer
  - Deputy Chair
  - Secretary
  - Treasurer
  - Committee of six (6) - 2 per telephone region
  - Quorum of 6 people for full committee meeting.

#### Finance

- Membership fee - suggested \$1, \$5, \$10 per annum.
- Dunalley Group has donated \$100 for assistance in setting up Assn.
- It was suggested by Colin Dell that ultimately TAS or the Government will finance the Assn.
- Swansea has donated \$100 also for setting up costs.
- It will be the same membership for all, regardless of financial situation.
- Donations from Groups are welcome.
- Recommendation of \$5 for membership was agreed to. It may be paid by individuals or from Group funds.
- Membership cards will be issued.
- Members list is to be kept confidential within the Assn.
- Election of Office Bearers to be postponed till constitution is adopted - hopefully next meeting.

### Aims and Objectives

Suggestions - welfare, support and education of VAOs in Tas.  
-support VAOs in their role of providing quality pt. care.

### Adopted Aim:

To enhance pre-hospital patient care by providing representation and support for the well-being of VAOs in Tasmania.

### Committee nominations for provisional committee:

- West Coast - Colleen Moore
- North West - David Fahey
- North - Rob Lee / Sally Carter
- North East - Howard Fox
- South - Roger Garth
- Central - Wayne Doran

Meeting resolved in favour of these recommendations.

### Voting

Moved Rob Lee, seconded Tim McKinlay that:

- Meetings be state-wide
  - Membership fees be \$5 per annum
  - Executive shall consist of: Chair/Public Officer  
Deputy Chair  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
6 Committee members (2 from each telephone area)
  - Quorum for committee meeting will be six(6) people
  - Quorum for general meeting to be 20 for a state-wide gathering.
- Carried.

Moved Kevin Jones, seconded Cheryl Wilson that aims be adopted as discussed. - carried.

Moved Lorraine Gardiner, seconded Colleen Moore that in the event of the winding up of the Assn all funds should go to the Tasmanian Volunteer Centre. - carried.

### Frequency of Meetings

Suggestion - 6 monthly + AGM

It was decided that initially we will need more frequent meetings until the Assn is set up, therefore next meeting to be 4/5/96 at Tarraleah at 1000hours. Catering to be the same again! Unanimously agreed.

Moved Kevin Jones, seconded Tim McKinlay that Robyn Dell open a bank account for our funds at Teacher, Police and Nurses Credit Union. Colin and Robyn to be provisional signatories. - carried.

John Prewer offered vote of thanks to Colin Dell for his initiative and perseverance in getting the Assn started.

*Wish Bones - Those who wish someone else would do all the work*

*Jaw Bones - Those who do all the talking but little else.*

*Knuckle Bones - Those who knock everything anyone else tries to do.*

*Back Bones - Those who get under the load and do all the work.*

*Most VAOs are Back Bones*

### General Issues (Moans and Groans)

- Support - or lack of it.
- Training - salaried officers are expected to do training of VAOs, usually at their own expense in their own time.
- Tarraleah has had only 6 days official training, i.e. by salaried officers, during the past 12 months.
- Training should be included in salaried officers' 4 day shift - NOT during their 4 days off.
- TAS Management needs to provide a salaried officer for each volunteer unit.
- David Galloway (Ambulance Educator - Volunteers - Coordinator) seems to spend his time training NOT co-ordinating.
- Swansea, Oatlands, Triabunna, Dover do not have salaried officers to look after them.
- Uniforms - Uniform means "all the same" !!
- Most areas have a lack of at least one piece of uniform.
- Aware that we need some recognition within the Service for identification of skill level but it does not need to have VOLUNTEER written so obviously on our backs. Suggest insignias or smaller wording.
- Females are unhappy with jump-suits.
- Assn should have a say on the markings on uniforms.

### Motion

- moved Trevor Glover-Smith , seconded John Prewer that volunteers be uniformed the same as salaried officers and that any markings/insignia will be as per skill level, to be done in consultation with Assn. - carried.

- moved David Fahey, seconded Bill DeKaste that the uniform review was done with inadequate consultation with volunteers in too short a timeframe. - carried.

### Claim Forms

Some groups have trouble obtaining claim forms for travelling, meals etc and pre-paid envelopes. Everyone was advised to ask Supervisors for them.

### News Release

John Prewer is to compose a short statement for press release to the effect that a meeting was held at Tarraleah on 30/3 by VAOs to discuss formation of association of VAOs in Tas. There were 30 VAOs present from all over the state, representing approx 400 VAOs.

### Salaried Officers

Should they be allowed to attend our meetings? It was decided that as we are a Volunteer Assn salaried officers should not attend our meetings unless invited for a specific purpose and specific time.

### Acknowledgements

A letter of thanks to go to Ian Mills, HEC Tarraleah, for the use of the building and to the HEC workers who assisted Cheryl in setting up the room for our meeting.

Thanks were extended to Jim Wilson, Tam Dell and others who the barbecue preparation & washing up.

Meeting closed at 1500 hours

Next meeting - Sat 4/5/96, 1000 hours, Tarraleah.