

## SA SUPERANNUANTS – MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING

1:00 pm Monday 29 March 2021

### **1. Welcome**

President James Vandenberg welcomed 42 members to the meeting.

### **2. Apologies**

Peter Fleming, Ray Hickman, Alan Raftery, Peter Frick, Jenny Sharpe, Bob Carmichael, Paul Pamment, Konrad Wraczynski, Phil Dutschke, Charles Tucker, Wilf Taylor.

### **3. President's Report**

James Vandenberg reported that after widening the membership of the Association to include ex-Commonwealth employees, and the member survey showing more than 90% of respondents in favour of a name change, the Committee had decided to propose to members on 3<sup>rd</sup> May that "Association of Public Sector Superannuants" be adopted as the new name. It was noted that there would be two meetings in May: 3 May and 31 May.

Brenton Pain reported on the Committee's consideration of the "Fund Selection and Other Superannuation Matters" bill currently before the SA Parliament. There did not seem to be particular issues of concern arising from the bill itself, and there were advantages to Triple S members in gaining a choice of super fund. At the same time, it seemed possible that the proposed legislation could facilitate Super SA operating through external contactors instead of Public Sector Act employees. The Committee had decided to ask the government about the expected consequences over time for members of the Association following on from the passage of the proposed legislation. Some members at the meeting expressed concern about any potential privatisation of Super SA's administration.

James noted the passing of Richard Vear. Richard was a member of the Electricity Industry Superannuation Scheme who contacted the Association when he heard it was challenging the formula used to re-calculate pensions when that scheme lost its constitutional protection.

When constitutional protection was first removed, EISS members were offered only taxed-source pensions that had been reduced from their original value by more than 15% in most cases. Richard worked closely with Ray Hickman and Clive Brooks on the EISS project. He gave the Association's involvement in the matter a standing that it would not have had without him. His membership of EISS allowed him to bring pressure to bear on the EISS trustee that it could not ignore. That pressure led to all EISS members being advised that they were entitled to choose, or resume, their original untaxed-source pensions if they wished.

The Association provided Richard with the technical superannuation knowledge that he needed to put his case effectively and it was also able to persuade the Legislative Council to refer the matter to the State Ombudsman for investigation.

James' condolence card on the Association's behalf to Richard's wife Margaret said

*Please accept our condolences on the death of Richard. He is remembered with respect and admiration by members of this Association's Executive Committee who worked with him on the task of getting appropriate treatment for ETSA pension scheme members following privatisation of South Australia's electricity assets.*

James advised that members Graham and Jenny Sharpe had kindly offered a donation towards the cost of producing the newsletter, following on from Treasurer Michael Evans' discussion of the Association's finances at the AGM on 22 February. James thanked Graham for his and Jenny's kind thought, but asked that members hold off for now from making donations, until a process has been decided.

James expected that a member donation of \$10 each year would be suggested.

#### **4. Guest Speaker: Greg Pattinson, Chief Executive Officer, Foodbank South Australia**

James welcomed guest speaker Greg Pattinson.

Ian Beckingham introduced Greg, and provided some opening comments on Foodbank's important work addressing food insecurity, and the range of people now looking for its support, many of whom would never have dreamed of needing it.

Greg's presentation began with a disturbing outline of the main causes of food insecurity (unexpected bills, living on a low income, rent and mortgage costs) and whom it affects, with 5 million Australians during the last 12 months skipping meals, not eating for a day or routinely cutting down on meal sizes to make their or their children's food go further, and women 50% more likely than men to be food insecure and suffer the physical and mental health consequences. It was noted that food insecure people are 5 times more likely to experience psychological distress than the average Australian.

Greg Pattinson then set out the scope of Foodbank's hunger relief work, assisting 135,000 South Australians each month principally through supermarket style food hubs currently at Edwardstown, Bowden, Elizabeth Mount Gambier, Christies Beach, Whyalla and Murray Bridge, providing food equal to \$120 in retail value for each \$20 charity-issued Foodbank voucher, including unlimited free bread, fruit and vegetables. Greg explained the well organised logistics and distribution system that receives donated and some purchased food from manufacturers, as well as retailers, farmers and growers; and supplies it to the food hubs and other access points from warehouses in Edwardstown, Berri, Mount Gambier and Whyalla.

Foodbank SA is run by the equivalent of 24 full time paid staff and 375 volunteers (from a pool of 600), and depends on corporate and individual donations. Foodbank estimates the

value of its South Australian operations - value of food donated, food transport, volunteer workforce, in-kind donations of services - to exceed \$22 million per annum. The SA government contributes about \$200,000.

Greg's illuminating and thought provoking presentation was very well received and concluded with answers to questions from several members.

Ian led members in thanking Greg, noting the scale and efficiency of his organisation, and confirmed that the Association would be making a donation to Foodbank.

### **13. Next Meeting**

Ian Beckingham advised that the next general meeting would be on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, with a guest speaker from Super SA's member education area.

**Meeting Closed:** 2:30 pm approximately

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