



## The Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc.

### Role Description: Social Issues Committee Chairperson

Version: 01.2

Drafted by: MH Helen Wall OAM and Heather Scott

Approved by the Board on 18.12.2018

Responsible Person: State President

Scheduled Review Date: October 2019

**Note that throughout this document extracts from the Constitution of The Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc. are placed in boxes. Please refer to the full copy of the Constitution available from [cwaofvic.org.au/about/constitution](http://cwaofvic.org.au/about/constitution) or upon request from Head Office.**

#### Eligibility

Note that **Election of Board Members and State Council Members: Policy and Procedures** states in Clause 2.2(a):

*In addition to the requirements in Clause 10.1 of the Constitution, a member is only eligible to be elected or appointed as a Board Member or a State Council Member other than a Group President if the member has been a member of State Council for at least 2 years (consecutive or otherwise).*

Further requirements are listed in the **Election of Board Members and State Council Members: Policy and Procedures** and in the Role Description. Please read **both** these documents carefully before submitting a nomination.

## Social Issues Committee Chairperson

Specific duties:

### 1. Committee Administration

- a. Chair the meetings of the Social Issues Committee.
- b. Plan the date, place and time of committee meetings and events, having regard to Board meetings, State Council meetings and other State events already on the Calendar of Events, and provide this information to the State President to be added to the Calendar of Events; book the venue for the meetings. State Committees meet a minimum of four times per year, before each State Council meeting. Additional meetings may be required prior to events. Reimbursements/allowances are for a maximum of four meetings of one committee (see the Reimbursements Policy and Procedures).
- c. As soon as possible after receiving the list of appointed committee members from the State President, prepare a list of names and contact details of all committee members and provide each member of the committee with this list.
- d. Write a letter/email of welcome to each committee member as soon as possible after State Conference, enclosing a copy of the minutes of the last meeting and a copy of the Guidelines for the Social Issues Committee.
- e. Attend to correspondence before and after meetings of the committee.
- f. Prepare the agenda for the meetings of the committee and circulate it in advance of the meeting whenever possible. Copies are to be provided to all committee members.
- g. Appoint a Minute Secretary for the taking of minutes at meetings of the committee, and to type and provide them to the Chairperson for distribution within one week after the meeting. Copies are to be provided to all committee members, and emailed to the State President and Deputy State President. All official correspondence to remain at Head Office at all times.
- h. Present a report on the work of the Committee to State Council as required, and bring the recommendations of the Committee to State Council for discussion and approval.
- i. Write a monthly report for the *Victorian Country Woman* magazine on the work of the Committee.
- j. Prepare a budget proposal for the committee and present it to the State Treasurer for inclusion in the Association budget. Manage the committee's expenditure, liaising with the State Treasurer and the Executive Director re authority to purchase orders.
- k. Undertake financial training.
- l. Write a concise report for the Official Annual Report of the work of the committee for the calendar year.

- m. Present a report to State Conference on the work of the Committee from January to May of the current year.

## **2. Support for the State President**

- a. As requested by the State President attend the Annual General Meetings and Half Yearly Conferences of Groups of the Country Women's Association of Victoria, to preside over the election of office bearers and update members on decisions made by the Board and State Council.
- b. Represent the State President at Group and Branch special events as requested by the State President.
- c. Undertake other duties as requested, in support of the State President.

## **3. Issues**

- a. With the committee, discuss, research and monitor social issues, with particular reference to how they affect the wellbeing of women, children and families.
- b. Provide information to members on issues discussed, through the Victorian Country Woman magazine, Association website and Facebook page.
- c. Respond to members' concerns relating to social issues, raised directly or through State Council. Encourage member involvement in the work of the Social Issues Committee and in social issues generally.
- d. Follow the Guidelines for the Social Issues Committee (see Appendix, page 5.) Consult with the State President before any action is taken. The State President is the spokesperson for the Association on all issues, so her approval must be obtained for all correspondence.
- e. With the committee, propose appropriate action to the State President on social issues: this may take the form of drafting press releases. letters and submissions to government for the State President; preparing pro forma letters for use by members in their local communities; and preparing resolutions (see below).

## **4. Resolutions**

- a. With the committee, prepare and present resolutions relating to social issues appropriate for State, National and ACWW Area and World Conferences.
- b. Monitor resolutions adopted at State, National and ACWW Area and World Conferences.
- c. When resolutions relating to social issues are adopted at State, National and ACWW Area and World Conferences, whether proposed by Victoria or other Member Societies, provide information about the issues involved to members, through the Victorian Country Woman magazine, Association website and Facebook page, and to the State President to assist her in advocating for the resolutions.

## **5. Social Issues Focus**

- a. Discuss possible issues to be the Social Issues Focus for study in the following year, and present a recommendation to State Council.
- b. Research the chosen social issue and provide information to members through the Victorian Country Woman magazine, Association website and Facebook page.
- c. With the committee, plan and organise suitable events relevant to the Social Issues Focus and to the purpose of the Association, as stated in Constitution Clause 1.4 (b).
- d. Provide guidance and assistance to Groups and Branches across the State to enable them to plan and organise similar events relevant to the Social Issues Focus.

## **6. Absence from Duty**

When unable or unavailable to perform the duties of Social Issues Committee Chairperson, for example due to illness or holiday, notify the State President in writing, if possible in advance, and request leave of absence. The State President will appoint another member to perform the duties during the absence.

## APPENDIX: GUIDELINES FOR THE SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

1. Be continually aware of what is going on in the community. This requires obtaining and carefully scanning newspapers (Local, State and National) the viewing of programmes such as Sixty Minutes, A Current Affair, Four Corners, etc and also relevant radio broadcasts.
2. Monitor Government enquiries and Parliamentary Reports.  
These take many hours to read, comprehend and précis. Information is obtained from members, and finally details are collated into submissions presented to the State President for approval before they are forwarded.
3. Consult with and keep the State President and State Council informed so that the State President can present any ideas which develop. The State President is the spokesperson on all matters. This means that the Chairperson must forward all replies and correspondence through Head Office. Regular contact with the State President is vital.
4. Seek and collect information on topical subjects which affect women and their families as directed by State Council. You may not always agree with the material you study; but it is necessary to keep an open mind. Legislation that is in the course of enactment should be studied thoroughly. All shades of opinion from around the State must be examined, and their relevance and impact considered. Information should be obtained from CWA Members, Local, State and Federal government and politicians, relevant and interested organisations and individuals. Present impartial views for discussion.
5. Seek publicity for the Committee within the Association and encourage members to contact the Committee members and present any information they might have. Members have expressed great concern about the social problems in their communities. Experience indicates that the Chairperson and the Committee should be speaking with members in their Branches and Groups; in this way member input is received.
6. Establish lines of communication with other people in the community. This takes time and effort; but eventually you build up contacts that are of mutual benefit.
7. Communicate with other members of the Committee to seek feedback on documents prepared. This is best done by email.
8. For resolutions submitted by other States or Countries contact the National Office or the South Pacific Area President for the background information. The background information for Victoria is available from Head Office.