

TASMANIAN ASSOCIATION OF STATE
SUPERANNUANTS
SUPER-NEWS

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The Newsletter for and by TASS members

35 Years Old

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**Annual General Meeting
Tuesday 17th March
Starting at 1.30p.m.
50 and Better Centre
108 Bathurst St.
1.30 until 3.30
Lower meeting Room**

EDITORIAL

Yes TASS is 35 years old this year. The first meeting took place in the H.E.C. theatre on 8th August 1974.

Now to 2009 and the current global recession. It is probably fair to say that 2009 and beyond will bring changes that we have not experienced previously. However those of us on RBF defined benefit incomes could well be less adversely affected than many others in the community.

Later in this issue President Rob. in his report, draws attention to the urgent need for new and younger members on the executive. Many of us are over 70 and the stimulus is needed from more members closer to the late 50's or 60's. (Oh to be so young!) Please give it serious thought or approach a suitable superannuant to stand for office. To the left is a notice of the 35th TASS Annual General Meeting. Please try and attend to show your support of TASS. The discussion on 'The effect of the global recession on Superannuation' will be of interest to all.

Ed.

FUTURE MEETINGS



35th Annual General Meeting.

Tuesday 17th March
Starting at 1.30pm
50 and Better Centre
108 Bathurst St
Lower meeting Room
All members and guests welcome
to attend

Executive Meetings

Tuesday 21 April
Tuesday 16 June
At Forestry Tasmania
Starting at 1.30

Northern General Meeting

Tuesday 19 May
This is only a notice of date.
The venue and times will be in the
next edition of Super-News

TASS 35th AGM

This is a very special AGM in that TASS was formed on 8th August 1974 in the HEC theatrette. We are deeply indebted to those who had the foresight to form the association and to all those loyal superannuants who have given continued support over the years. To celebrate the event the AGM will be different this year. Our secretary will give a brief talk on some of the highlights over the years. There will then be open discussion led by the outgoing president Rob. vanSchie, on

'The effect of the global recession on superannuation'. Clearly the global recession will result in many changes in society, how will these changes affect us? Please feel free to ask questions. If we are not able to answer any question at the meeting we will find out later and advise via Super-News and our web site.

The TASS web site

For those of our members who have not yet had a look at our web site, it really has some useful information included. All recent copies of Super-News are available also the computer help line including items that will appear in later editions of Super-News. The address is www.tass.org.au. There are also click-on links to other sites that are useful to superannuants. As mentioned in the Treasurer's report we would like some members to receive their Super-News on the web. More on this in the next Super-News.

The May Super-News

In the May Super-News we will have details of the Northern luncheon. Also included will be some items held over from this edition. Including

- Information from RBF on 'Who is the surviving partner?'
- Female heart attacks
- New reverse mortgage information
- Report on ACSPRO activities in Canberra.
- More humorous items. *Ed*

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2008

Better Super.

Implementation was finalised this year. In July each superannuant received the PAYG payment summary of their superannuation income stream.

In September superannuants received a document showing information affecting Centrelink entitlements. A detailed explanation of these documents was provided in the November 2008 Super-news. Better Super created anomalies between untaxed and taxed superannuation schemes. Only one of these has been resolved so far, the eligibility for the CSHC. The others hopefully will be rectified by one of the Reviews currently being conducted.

Reviews.

The Senate Community Affairs Committee in April 08 produced a report "A Decent Quality of Life". The Government subsequently set up the following reviews which are currently in progress. Submissions have been made by TASS as well as kindred groups such as AIR, ACPSRO and S. Australian Superannuants.

1. Pension Review 2. Indexation Review 3. Taxation Review

Interested members can obtain detail by Googling the relevant review.

Regulation and Supervision of the RBF Board

In October 2008 the Government agreed to support the regulation and independent supervision of the Board by the national industry regulator, the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA). Following the announcement and given the current economic turmoil, three members of the committee met with RBF senior staff to discuss the security of the defined benefit pension scheme. A report on that meeting is elsewhere in this Super-news.

Speakers

There were two excellent speakers this year at our general meetings in Hobart.

Merry Branson from the Australian Bureau of Statistics spoke on the composition and use of the Consumer Price Index, the index used for our Superannuation pension. Eileen Levett from COTA, spoke on what needs to be done immediately after the death of someone close. The committee is reluctant to organise speakers for meetings given the generally poor attendance.

Website

This is very capably managed by Mal Jones. Members are encouraged to comment on the content or layout, and input is welcomed.

Super-news

We continue to receive praise for this publication produced by Tony Haig. We welcome articles/news from members.

Committee

John Chalmers joined the committee during the year. I will be retiring as President at the March AGM as this will be the end of my fourth year as President. Also retiring in March is our long serving treasurer Lance Brown. It is imperative that we restock and revitalise the committee, and members are urged to consider joining and/or to convince others to join the committee. You will be serving a common cause as well as enjoy good fellowship.

My thanks to all committee members, especially treasurer Lance Brown, membership officer Kevin Hardy, secretary Tom Ellison, minute secretary Kay Jones, Tony Haig and Mal Jones for their work and support. Thanks also to June and Bert Hazzlewood in Launceston for representing the committee in Northern Tasmania.

Rob van Schie

The TASMANIAN ASSOCIATION of STATE SUPERANNUANTS
ABN 31 638 808 031
TREASURER'S REPORT for the YEAR ENDING 31st DEC. 2008

Mr President and Members,

The annual report and balance sheet, after auditing, show that we have had a successful financial year. In addition we have had about 100 new members that have joined this year, unfortunately there is a larger than usual loss of previous members.

The help from members who continually make donations and the interest from our investments have helped our cash position during 2008. However the interest from investments will be much less in 2008. On behalf of the Executive please accept my thanks for these donations. We have used most of the backlog of stamps but still have enough for postage this year. The increase in the postage rates will also add to the expenses for this year.

The investment in the Web-site this year so far has not been of financial benefit, but as more members become used to using computers and obtain Super-News that way the costs of posting Super-News will decrease. Maybe this year we will be able to offer members a choice for next year. We will certainly not be changing entirely to using the Web-site for Super-News.

As usual the recruiting of members, particularly for the Executive is not any easier for this Association than any other voluntary group. We still need new members in both areas, if interested please come to an Executive meeting as an observer and then decide if you are able to join it.

The Executive members are based in the South of the State because of the travelling costs involved in the monthly meetings; however members from further out are very welcome to write to the Executive to have their ideas heard.

Later in the meeting, as required by our Constitution, we will be setting our dues for 2010, bearing in mind our financial position I will recommend that they remain as they are for this year, they are reviewed each year.

I now move that this report and the Statement of Receipts and Payments and Balance Sheet for the year ending 31st December 2008 be received and adopted.

Lance A Brown

Treasurer,

Membership Officer's Report

We have had a very good year for membership in 2008. At the end of 2008 we had 1546 members which per capita make us the highest representation of any superannuant group in Australia.

Of interest 60% are in the '62' telephone area, 18.5% in the '63' area, 13.5% in the '64' area, 7.5% interstate and the remainder overseas. We have a floating membership of about 200 who forget to renew and then notice that they do not get Super-News and then renew. We all realise that with increasing age forgetfulness is not uncommon.

Kevin Hardy Membership Officer

Unaudited Financial Statement & Balance Sheet for
the year ended December 2008

<u>RECEIPTS</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>PAYMENTS</u>	<u>\$</u>
Bank Interest	1	Affiliation Fees	185
Donations from Members	2 533	Conferences	635
Sale of stamps	50	Aus. Taxation Office	1 184
Subscriptions 2008	3 587	Bank Charges	2
Subscriptions 2009	7 381	Flyers, membership	754
Subscriptions 2010	57	Membership, Expenses.	1 222
T/fers in from Investments	8 000	Postage of Newsletters	1 791
		Preparation of Newsletters	3 839
		Public Risk Insurance	462
		Rent, PO Box 66	70
		Rent Meeting Rooms	50
		Secretarial Expenses	366
		T/frs out to Investments	10 000
		Travelling Expenses	700
		Website Maintenance	882
		TOTAL = <u>21 609</u>	TOTAL = <u>22 142</u>

Statement of Investments as at 31 December 2008

Tasmanian Perpetual Trustees **Fixed Term Fund**
Balance Brought Forward **50 917**

Add Transfers from General Account 3 000
Add Interest 3 678
Balance **57 595**

Tasmanian Perpetual Trustees **At Call Fund**
Balance Brought Forward **11 548**
Less Transfers to General Account (8 000)
Add Transfers from General Account 7 000
Add Interest 602
Balance **11 151**

Total Investments **68 746**

Cash at Bendigo Bank (Cheque A/c) **1 091**

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2008 **69 837**

Lance A Brown,
Treasurer

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, TUES. 17TH MARCH 2009

The meeting will be held in the 50 and Better Centre, 108 Bathurst St
Lower meeting room Commencing at 1.30pm

Agenda

- Apologies
- Minutes of 2008 AGM
- Reports (see this newsletter)
- Election of Office bearers
- Election of Auditor and Legal adviser

Election of Office Bearers All positions are declared vacant. Although many of the committee have indicated a willingness to stand, nominations can be made from the floor for any position, or if unable to attend, in writing. The positions are President, vice-president, Treasurer, Secretary, Minute Secretary, Membership Officer, Super-News editor and general committee.

The AGM will be followed by a General Meeting

General Meeting

Agenda

- Tom Ellison - Brief highlights from the records of the past 35 years of TASS
- General discussion led by Rob. vanSchie on "The effect of the global recession on superannuation"
- Any general business from the floor.

The meeting should conclude by 3.30pm

On the lighter Side

Don't worry about avoiding temptation. As you grow older, it will avoid you.

-- Winston Churchill

The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning and a good ending; and to have the two as close together as possible.

-- George Burns

The cardiologist's diet: If it tastes good, spit it out

Maybe it's true that life begins at fifty ... but everything else starts to wear out, fall out, or spread out.----- Phyllis Diller

Money can't buy you happiness .. but it does bring you a more pleasant form of misery. -- Spike Milligan

Security and Regulation of the RBF Contributory Scheme

The following is a summary of a meeting with RBF requested by TASS and attended by executive members, Rob. vanSchie, Tony Robinson and Brian Richardson.

The Life Pension

Public sector employees who were employed prior to 15 May 1999 were, or still are, in a Contributory Scheme, which is a defined benefit scheme. Benefits are based on a formula which takes into account salary, length of contributory service and contribution rates. The Contributory Scheme was closed to new employees from 15 May 1999. Superannuants who were in a Contributory Scheme receive a Life Pension.

This Life Pension is a legislated obligation of the RBF (“guaranteed by the Government and the RBF” according to the RBF website) and is indexed by the Consumer Price Index twice per year.

The Life Pension is made up of a taxed component, managed by the RBF, which represents Contributions and their investment returns, plus an untaxed component which is provided to the RBF by the Government from consolidated revenue, and from semi government agencies such as the Hydro and Forestry Tasmania.

The untaxed/taxed proportion of the Fund is determined by the Actuary based on the contributions flowing into the fund and their investment returns. If there is a significant and sustained decrease in contributions and/or their investment returns, the untaxed/taxed ratio would increase, i.e. the Government’s liability would increase. This is how the Government’s guarantee works. It is therefore in the interest of the Government that the RBF invests its funds wisely and responsibly.

Cash

The Tasmanian Government’s investment arm TASCORP is one of the several investment managers which the RBF contracts to manage its funds, in this case its pure cash fund. Some of the other managers also have investments in cash but only as a component of their overall fund.

TASCORP charges no management fee; while it guarantees the basic bank bill rate any premium earned above this is retained.

The RBF will transfer funds to and from TASCORP to meet its cash flow needs. All liabilities of TASCORP are guaranteed by the State through the operation of Section 15 of the Tasmanian Public Finance Corporation Act 1985.

Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA)

Security and Regulation of the RBF Contributory Scheme

The APRA is the prudential regulator of the Australian financial services industry. It is funded largely by the industries that it supervises. It is responsible for regulating bodies in the financial sector in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth, i.e. promoting financial stability in Australia and protecting the interests of depositors, insurance policy holders and superannuation fund members.

It was established in 1998, but the Government has only recently agreed for the RBF to be supervised by APRA.

Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Act 1993 (SIS)

The SIS Act 1993 was a major initiative of the Keating Labor Government to regulate superannuation schemes throughout the country. The Commonwealth Government proposed, and all State and Territory Governments supported, an exemption from the provisions of the Act for certain public sector superannuation schemes. This exemption recognises the special circumstances that apply to public sector schemes. Part 2 of schedule IAA of the SIS Regulations 1994 specifies those schemes that are Exempt Public Sector Superannuation Schemes (EPSSS) for the purposes of the SIS Act.

The Tasmanian Schemes that are classified as an EPSSS are those established under the following legislation

- Governor of Tasmania Act 1992
- Judges' Contributory Pension Act 1968
- Solicitor-General Act 1983
- Retirement Benefits Act 1993

The Parliamentary Superannuation Act 1973 and the Parliamentary Retirement Benefits Act 1985 are also listed as EPSSS's in the SIS Act. These pieces of legislation were repealed on 31 December 2002 and since 1 January 2003 the PSF and the PRBF have been sub funds of the RBF. It is expected that the Commonwealth Government will amend the schedule at some time in the future to reflect the revised legislative reference for these schemes. Even though the above schemes are listed as EPSSS's all State Governments have signed a Heads of Government Agreement to comply with the principles of the SIS Act.

Ref.<http://www.treasury.tas.gov.au/domino/dtf/dtf.nsf/v-super/10ACF3FBB3379927CA256D5D000A4AD1>

Cost of Living/Standard of Living

Over the years TASS along with other organisations has been arguing the case for indexation of our pensions by an index related to movement in wage rates rather than the present 'cost of living' index (CPI). We have used the argument that like the Centrelink pensions our pensions should be indexed at the same rate as the 'standard of living' not the 'cost of living'. A number of our members have asked that we outline the differences between the two indices.

The Cost of Living is the cost of maintaining a certain fixed standard of living. The Commonwealth Department of Statistics calculates this cost of living by averaging out the costs of a basket of goods. If the cost of this basket increases by 2% then the CPI or Cost of living is also said have increased by 2%.

The standard of living relates to the increasing wealth of the nation. As the National wealth increases, so does the standard of living. That is the average person has a higher standard of living.

Take two hypothetical cases.

Both retired with the same pension in say 1980.

The first has a pension indexed by CPI (as ours is) while the second is indexed by Male Total Average weekly Earnings (MTAWE). The first (CPI) would receive a pension in dollar terms that would allow the same standard of living as that back in 1980. Wage earners will have enjoyed a significantly increased standard of living over the same period.

The second case indexed by MTAWE would receive a pension which in dollar terms would keep the same relative value as other wage earners. That is it would allow for a similar increase in standard of living as the general public.

There are many indices used to measure the standard of living but one important one is the Male Total Average Weekly Earnings. (MTAWE).

The Federal Government some years ago recognised that if Centrelink pensions were only increased by CPI, then the recipients would be locked into a pension that ignored the National increase in the Standard of Living. For this reason they are indexed by "the higher of MTAWE or CPI". It has been our argument that as our pensions are only indexed by CPI, our superannuants are locked into the same standard of living as the day they retired and are falling further and further behind the living standards of the general public. *Ed.*

A slight change of Words for some 60's hits to make them relevant to our times.

The Bee Gees --- How Can You Mend a Broken Hip.

Roberta Flack --- The First Time Ever I Forgot Your Face.

Johnny Nash --- I Can't See Clearly Now.

Paul Simon --- Fifty Ways to Lose Your Liver

The Commodores --- Once, Twice, Three Times to the Bathroom.

Procol Harem --- A Whiter Shade of Hair.

Leo Sayer --- You Make Me Feel Like Napping.

The F Keys

The following is a continuation of Advice on the use of P.C.s entitled From the Help Desk. This was arranged by our web master Mal. Jones who acknowledges 'Linking Tasmanian Seniors', who allowed TASS to reproduce their "Help Desk". *Ed.*

Along the top of your keyboard is a row of keys numbered F1 to F10 or F12. Even though you may never use them, they do have function. In fact, the F stands for Function and they are called Function keys. Below is a list of what each key does. After the list is a trick that you can use Function keys for.

Most of the items on the list below apply only to Windows and Windows' programs, especially Windows Explorer and Internet Explorer.

Some programs have their own set of functions that they have assigned to the Function keys. You can find these in the menu of the program. The menu items which are assigned a function key have the corresponding function key designated after the item name. If you press that function key, you can perform that function without using the menu or buttons. The program's help or manual should also tell which functions are assigned to the function keys.

You might want to try each one of these as you read through them.

Function Keys for Windows

- **F1** - Opens Help for the currently displayed program (this does not work on all programs).
- **Windows Logo key and F1** - Opens Windows' Help.
- **F2** - Highlights the name of a selected object for renaming in Windows Explorer, desktop, and some other Windows' programs. First, you need to select an item that can be renamed (like, a file or shortcut). After pressing F2, you can then type what you want to rename the object to.
- **F3** - Brings up Search in Windows Explorer.
- **F4** - Drops down the Address bar in Internet Explorer showing your previous locations. This allows you to scroll down and select one.
- **Alt and F4** - Closes the currently displayed program.
- **F5** - Refreshes the view in Windows Explorer, Internet Explorer (in other words, it looks at the source again and reloads the contents), and other programs. In MailWasher it checks the mail
- **F6** - moves the cursor around the structure of a program. Pressing it may cycle you from window to window or from place to place within the program. In Windows Explorer it moves you from the left pane to the right pane and back. This is similar to what the Tab key does.
- **Alt and F6** - Switches between multiple windows in the same program (for example, when the Notepad Find dialog box is displayed, ALT+F6 switches between the Find dialog box and the main Notepad window).
- **F7** - does not have any functionality in Windows. It may be used in individual programs.
- **F8** - accesses Safe Mode if pressed at the right time while the computer is starting. Safe Mode is a trouble-shooting mode, which will start the computer with minimal drivers.
- **F9** - does not have any functionality in Windows. It may be used in individual programs.

From the Help Desk Advice for Computer Users

- **F10** - Changes the focus to and from the menu. Pressing the Alt key will also do this. Once the focus is on the menu items, you can use the arrow keys to navigate to an item and the Enter key to select it.
- **Shift and F10** - brings up the popup menu in Windows Explorer much like right clicking on an item does.
- **F11** - Switches between regular screen mode and full screen mode. Full screen mode is like a maximized screen but with more screen space and less toolbar controls.
- **F12** - does not have any functionality in Windows. It may be used in individual programs.

You may have noticed that some of the Function keys are not used (F7, F9, F12) in Windows. That doesn't mean that they can't be used. You can assign them or any other key combination to quickly run programs that you frequently use. Here are instructions for doing that.

1. Locate the shortcut of that program. The Start menu is a good place to find shortcuts (every icon in the Start menu is a shortcut). If the program doesn't have a shortcut, create one.
2. Right click on the shortcut and select the Properties item from the popup menu.
3. The Properties dialog will open. Go to the Shortcut tab.
4. Put the cursor in the Shortcut key textbox and press the Function key or key combination (like Alt + Ctrl + 2) which you want to use to start the program.
5. The Function key name or key combination name will appear in the box.
6. Click on the Apply button (or the OK button) and close the dialog.

After you have done this, whenever you press that Function key or key combination, that program will start. Please note that if you use a Function key or key combination that is already used by Windows or other programs, it will no longer work in Windows or the other programs as it used to and will instead start your program.

To disable this, follow the above instructions but press Backspace or Delete in the Shortcut key textbox.

The Function keys are there to make your life easier. Now you can start using them.

Computer Sex

A college professor, who was previously a sailor, was very aware that ships are spoken of as 'she' and 'her'. He often wondered by what Gender computers should be addressed.

To answer that question, he set up two groups of computer experts. The first was comprised of women, and the second of men. Each group was asked to recommend whether computers should be referred to in the feminine or masculine gender. They were asked to give four reasons for their recommendations.

The group of women reported that computers should be referred to in the masculine gender because:

1. In order to get their attention, you have to turn them on.
2. They have a lot of data, but are still clueless.
3. They are supposed to help you solve problems, but half the time they are the problem.
4. As soon as you commit to one, you realise that, if you had waited a little longer you could have had a better model.

The men, on the other hand, concluded that computers should be referred to in the feminine gender because:

1. No one but the Creator understands their internal logic.
2. The native language they use to communicate with other computers is incomprehensible to everyone else.
3. Even your smallest mistakes are stored in long term memory for later retrieval.
4. As soon as you make a commitment to one, you find yourself spending half your pay on accessories for it.

You decide!! Ed.

USEFUL CONTACT FOR MEMBERS

As a service to members TASS will include a section giving useful contact points (usually telephone numbers) which may be of value to members.

RBF Pension queries or death of a superannuant.....	1800 622 631
Australian Tax Office: income Tax inquiries.....	132861
Superannuation help.....	131020
Tax Refund.....	132863
CENTRELINK	
To book and appointment, regional office.....	131021
Pension enquiries.....	132300
Overseas Pensions.....	131673
Family enquiries.....	131305
Disability, sickness and carer.....	132717
Hearing or speech impairment.....	1800 000 587
Financial services	
Burnie.....	6434 1535
Devonport.....	6424 0665
Launceston.....	6332 8298
Hobart.....	6232 1555
Bellerive.....	6244 0566
Better Hearing Australia (Hobart) voluntary group.....	6228 0011

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PENSION LIMITS AS FROM JAN. 2009

INCOME TESTS

Part pension is possible for a couple receiving less than \$2,602 per fortnight

Single receiving less than \$1,558 per fortnight

For a pensioner couple separated by ill health, less than \$3,080 per fortnight

Commonwealth Seniors Health Card for a couple on less than \$80,000 per year

For single on less than \$50,000 per year

ASSETS TESTS (not including your home)

a) For Home owners	For Full Pension	For Part Pension
Single Pensioners	Up to \$171,750	Less than \$550,500
Couples(combined)	Up to \$243,500	Less than \$873,500
Couples Sep.due to ill health	Up to \$243,500	Less than \$1,001,000
b) For non-home owners		
Single Pensioners	Up to \$296,250	Less than \$675,000
Couples(Combined)	Up to \$368,000	Less than \$998,000
Couples Sep. due to ill health	Up to \$368,000	Less than \$1,125,500

If you change your address, would you please advise us of your new address?
 Some members believe that advising RBF of a change will also involve that information coming to us. This is not so. RBF quite correctly keep their address data confidential and will not pass this information on to us. If we do not have your new address, we cannot send you Super-News.