Australian Men's Shed Association
SHOULDER TO SHOULDER
ABN: 84 144 866 277

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Australian Men's Shed Association

December 18th 2025

Level 2, 437 Hunter Street Newcastle

Attendees: Helen Barker (Deputy Chair) Ian Tooke (Blayney Men's Shed, AMSA Board, AMSANSW), John Sharples (Cessnock M/S), Dennis Chandler (Denman Mens Shed), Tom Healy - Mungindi Men's Shed Inc), Alex Paton (Sanctuary Point M/S, AMSANSW), Terry Foster (Cessnock Men's Shed and Garden Inc), Reg Grove (Parramatta & District Mens Shed Inc)

AMSA Staff: David Helmers (CEO), Beth Gow, Mark Lilly, Marty Leist, Mel White, Ann Perrott, Shelby Burns, Tim Kroehen, Emma Bredenhann, Bec Whipper

Auditor: Kevin Helmers (AMSA Auditor, PKF Lawler)

Meeting commenced at 11:00am

Agenda Item	
1	**Apologies** Busselton Men's Shed – WA Muswellbrook Men's Shed - NSW South West Sydney Men's Shed – NSW Wyndham Mens Shed – NSW Peter Torenbeek – NSW York Men's Shed – WA Heywood Men's Shed – VIC Circular Head Men's Shed – NSW Wycheproof Mens Shed - VIC Griffith Shed for Men – NSW Rosefield Community Shed Inc – SA
2	**Proxies Held by the Chair** Balaklava Mens Shed Beacon Community Menshed Berrigan Mens Shed Inc Branxton-Greta Men's Shed Inc Bundanoon Mens Shed Inc Circular Head Mens Shed Inc Cool Country Mens Shed Inc Coolah Men's Shed Inc Dural Mens Shed Inc Eurobodalla Woodcraft Guild Inc Foothills mens Shed Geeveston Community Workshop Gladstone Men's Shed Assoc. Inc Gosford Community Men's Shed Inc Gundagai Men's Shed Inc

	Kanahooka Mens Shed Inc Liverpool Mens Shed Inc Macclesfield mens Shed Inc Manilla Mens Shed Inc Melbourne Mens Shed Inc Mens Shed Narellan Millmerran Men's Shed Inc Mornington Mens Shed Inc Mt Black Mens Shed Inc Murraylands Community Men's Shed Inc Murrurundi Community Men's Shed Muswellbrook Men's Shed Newcastle Mens Shed Inc Rosefield Community Shed Inc Russell Island Mens Shed Inc South West Sydney Men's Shed Inc Southern Illawarra mens Shed Inc The Community Shed Boyne Valley Inc The Inglewood Mates Shed Inc Toogoolawah Mens Shed Tuross Head Mens Shed Inc Waikerie Mens Shed Inc Willos Mens Shed Inc Forrest Men's Shed Inc **Proxies held be attendees** Ian Tooke 2322 Men's Shed Blayney Shire Community Mens Shed Inc Borenore Nashdale Mens Shed Inc Cootamundra Mens Shed Inc Cudal & District Mens Shed Inc Darlington Point Men's Shed Inc Greenwich Community Workshop Griffith Men's Shed Mathoura Mens Shed Inc Molong Mens Shed Inc Mudgee Mens Shed Inc Oberon Men's Shed Inc Orange Mens Shed Inc Portland Mens Shed Inc The Mens Shed Young Inc John Sharples (Cessnock M/S) Dennis Chandler (Denman Mens Shed) Tom Healy - Mungindi Men's Shed Inc) Alex Paton (Sanctuary Point M/S, AMSANSW) Reg Grove (Parramatta & District Mens Shed Inc)
3	**Acceptance of the Minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting** Moved by Ian Tooke (Blaney M/S) Seconded by Dennis Chandler (Denman M/S)
4	Helen Barker (AMSA Deputy Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting and passed on the apologies of the AMSA Chair Luke Clifton who was unable to attend today due to business commitments.

Helen proceeded to read the Chairs report for 2025

Chairman's Report

On behalf of the Board, I am pleased to present this Chairman's Report for the Australian Men's Shed Association (AMSA).
Before reflecting on the year just past, it is important to acknowledge that this report introduces a significant development that many members and stakeholders will be hearing about for the first time.
Over recent years, AMSA has grown in scale, responsibility and national profile. With more than 1,300 Men's Sheds across Australia, increasing government investment, and heightened expectations around governance, compliance and accountability, the Board has been carefully considering how best to ensure AMSA remains strong, credible and sustainable for the long term.
In response, the Board has taken the deliberate and considered step to establish a new entity: *Sheds and Community Health Services Limited (SaCHS).* This new entity has been created to strengthen governance and oversight at a national level, while preserving AMSA's identity, purpose and member-led character. It is a proactive evolution and reflects the Board's responsibility to steward the Men's Shed movement for future generations.
The establishment of SaCHS is the most significant governance reform in AMSA's history. It marks a clear evolution of our structure that matches the scale and impact of the organisation today, while protecting the grassroots foundations on which the movement was built. I want to talk more about SaCHS a little later.

The Strength of the Men's Shed Movement

AMSA's core purpose remains: to support Men's Sheds and to improve the health and wellbeing of men through connection, purpose and community.
Today, Men's Sheds operate in more than 1,300 communities across Australia, providing safe, welcoming spaces where men can come together to share skills, build friendships and support one another. The evidence continues to be clear: participation in Men's Sheds improves health outcomes, reduces isolation and strengthens community cohesion. This is grassroots, preventative health at its best.
Throughout the year, AMSA has continued to deliver valued national services to members, including insurance, grants support, advice and resources. Programs such as *Shed Mates* and *Spanner in the Works?* have expanded their reach, giving sheds practical, evidence-based ways to support wellbeing in an authentic, shed-led way. National Gatherings and events, now delivered in-house, have strengthened connection across the movement while reducing costs for members to attend.
AMSA has also continued to work constructively with State Associations and partners to reduce duplication, improve coordination and strengthen the overall Men's Shed ecosystem.

Advocacy and Government Engagement

Advocacy remains central to AMSA's role and has intensified over the past year. AMSA continues to be recognised as a trusted national voice within the men's health sector, contributing to policy development, public discourse and bipartisan engagement.
The Australian Government's $32 million investment in men's health earlier this year represents the most significant national commitment in more than a decade, with $8.3 million directly supporting Men's Sheds. This outcome reflects sustained advocacy by AMSA, alongside partners including Movember and Healthy Male, and the collective voice of sheds across the country.
The appointment of the Hon. Dan Repacholi MP as Special Envoy for Men's Health further signals growing recognition of Men's Sheds as a practical, evidence-based contributor to men's wellbeing. Through regular engagement with the Envoy, Ministers, parliamentarians and senior officials, AMSA continues to reinforce the role of sheds as preventative,

community-based infrastructure delivering measurable social and health outcomes.
Men's Sheds are now referenced within national strategies addressing suicide prevention, social isolation and community resilience. This recognition brings both opportunity and responsibility, underscoring the importance of strong governance, accountability and sustainability.

Strengthening Governance for the Future – Establishment of SaCHS

Now with the context of our strength as a movement, and as a national peak body, I want to delve into more detail about SaCHS.
One of the most important achievements of the year has been the Board's decision to establish *Sheds and Community Health Services Limited (SaCHS)* as a new governance and oversight entity for AMSA.
Independent reviews, including the 2021 Governance Review and the 2025 Constitutional Review, identified that while AMSA's representative, member-based governance model has served the movement well, it is no longer sufficient on its own for an organisation of AMSA's size, funding profile and regulatory responsibilities. These reviews highlighted the need for stronger professional oversight, clearer separation of governance and operations, and enhanced compliance capability.
But rather than dismantling AMSA's representative structure, the Board resolved to create SaCHS as a company limited by guarantee with a skills-based Board as an additional governance tier**.** This approach preserves AMSA's identity and grassroots connection to sheds, while providing the level of governance and accountability expected of a modern, federally funded national charity.
SaCHS has been established to:

- Provide professional governance, financial oversight, risk management and compliance
- Strengthen alignment with ACNC, ASIC and Commonwealth funding requirements
- Improve long-term sustainability and funding confidence
- Allow AMSA to focus on advocacy, member support and leadership of the Men's Shed movement

Importantly, AMSA itself is not being replaced and remains the national peak body representing Men's Sheds, with its Board continuing as a mix of member-elected and appointed Directors. Membership rights, voting arrangements, services, insurance and the National Shed Development Program remain unchanged.
The AMSA Chair will always have a position on the SaCHS Board to ensure the voice of sheds remains central to governance and decision-making. The Federal Department of Health, Disability & Ageing – responsible our primary source of funding - has confirmed that this structure aligns with governance recommendations and poses no risk to AMSA's funding eligibility.
The establishment of SaCHS represents a responsible and necessary evolution of AMSA's governance—strengthening oversight and compliance while protecting the member-driven nature of the Men's Shed movement.

Looking Ahead

AMSA enters 2026 with confidence and clarity of purpose. The Strategic Plan for 2025–2027 reflects a mature organisation focused on impact, sustainability and service to members, rather than growth for growth's sake.
The continued expansion of national programs, including wellbeing initiatives, health musters, Shed Mates and *Spanner in the Works?,* demonstrates AMSA's ability to translate policy recognition into practical, on-the-ground outcomes. National and regional events such as ShedFEST, Men's Shed Week and the National Men's Shed Gathering continue to strengthen connection, capability and shared identity across the movement.
With SaCHS providing strengthened governance oversight, AMSA is better positioned to manage risk, meet regulatory and funding expectations, and pursue opportunities that support long-term stability. This structure enables AMSA to remain deeply connected to its grassroots membership while operating with the professionalism expected of a contemporary national charity.

Acknowledgements

I would like to sincerely thank my fellow Directors for their professionalism, judgement and commitment during a year of significant change. I also acknowledge the AMSA executive

	team and staff for their dedication and expertise in supporting sheds across the country. Most importantly, I thank our members and volunteers. Every shed that opens its doors, welcomes a new member, or quietly supports a man doing it tough is the reason AMSA exists. Your work continues to make a profound difference in communities across Australia. **Conclusion** The Men's Shed movement is strong, trusted and deeply valued in communities across Australia. That strength has been built over decades through the quiet, consistent work of volunteers and shedders who open doors, welcome others and offer connection, purpose and care. The establishment of *Sheds and Community Health Services Limited (SaCHS)* stands as the Board's most important contribution to securing that legacy. It is a decisive and future-focused reform that ensures AMSA remains credible, compliant and sustainable—capable of stewarding public trust, government investment and community confidence well into the future. With SaCHS providing strengthened governance oversight, AMSA is positioned not just to endure, but to lead: to advocate with authority, to support sheds with confidence, and to continue improving the health and wellbeing of men across Australia. On behalf of the Board, I thank our members, partners, staff and supporters for your trust and commitment. This year marks not an end, but a turning point—one that sets the Men's Shed movement on a strong and secure footing for decades to come. Also I would like to acknowledge the services of three AMSA Directors who today are retiring from the AMSA Board, Stuart Eustice, Barry Laubsch and David Seen who have worked tirelessly over the years contributing service to governing the AMSA.
5	Auditors report and questions for the Auditor Mr Kevin Helmers Currently the AMSA has assets totaling $ 2,833,585 and liabilities totaling $ 2,135,500 leaving the Association in a secure financial position. No Questions for the Auditor
6	**Acceptance of Financial Statements** **Moved** John Sharples (Cessnock M/S) **Seconded:** Alex Paton (Sanctuary Point M/S) **Resolution accepted**
7	**Appoint PKF Auditors for 2025-2026 audit** Moved: Ian Tooke (Blaney M/S) Seconded: Reg Grove (Parramatta M/S) **Resolution accepted**
8	**Questions received prior to the meeting** The below questions were provided in writing from Stephen Cox (president) and Ian Yager (secretary) Hallidays Point Mens Shed (NSW).

	Q 1. What will AMSA do to achieve a unified men's shed movement when there remain such fundamental differences among the state associations and sheds in NSW/ACT are not members of their state association? The review recommended that the AMSA maintains a unified Mens Shed movement, however there was no clear definition of what a unified Mens Shed moment actually is. Under the AMSA Strategic plan accepted by the AMSA Board and the department of health, a unified Mens shed movement is defined as follows as a performance measure of this recommendation. *"AMSA defines the leadership of a unified movement as; A Men's Shed organisation that maintains a high majority of membership of known Men's Sheds that meet the defined standard of a Men's (or Community) Shed and seeks to support, advocate, and collaborate with stakeholders, for the benefit of these members".* With over 1300 Mens Shed and all State Associations as members of the AMSA, the AMSA is currently undeniably a unified organisation. Under the current AMSA constitution and bylaws there are no criteria for what constitutes a state association; however, this might be reviewed so State Associations need to validate those who they service or represent, currently no state association is currently required to provide any validation of their claimed membership base. *Q 2. What types of "skills" is the Board seeking?* The AMSA Board regularly conducts skills assessment of the current directors and recruit Skills based Directors to fill any shortfalls, all skills-based vacancies are publicly advertised, and the recruitment is vetted through the approved subcommittee. *Q 3. Why are there currently 2 appointed directors with legal skills?* One current director who brings legal skills to the board is due to retire from the Board of AMSA this year, the recruitment of a second board member with legal skills was part of our succession planning. *Q 4. Why does AMSA have on the Board, a director who has exceeded his term of office and been a director since August 2016?* We are unaware of any Director exceeding their term of office, and no name has been provided of the Director in question. If you believe AMSA has not complied with our constitutional obligations, you can pursue these matters with the ACNC and ASIC. *Q 5. What will AMSA do to include each shed's email address on the "Find a Shed" search engine to facilitate shed to shed contact?* Designated phone numbers are provided for the public to make direct contact to Mens Sheds, AMSA is committed to complying with protecting the privacy of individuals and members from data harvesting and no email addresses will be provided on our website.
9	**Questions from the floor** Tom Healy - Mungindi Men's Shed Inc) asked what are the terms of office for Directors. The company secretary responded that elected Directors are two year terms with a maximum of 6 years and skills based Directors are 3 year terms with a maximum of 9.
10	**Announcement of Director election results** Tasmania no nomination was received NSW/ACT, Ian Tooke only nomination no election required SA/NT, Don Higgs was the only nomination no election required

11	**Meeting Closed at 11.26am**