

Senior Territorians Advisory Council (STAC) Operational Guidelines

The Senior Territorians Advisory Council (STAC) will be an advisory council to the Minister for Senior Territorians that provides advice on seniors' issues, government programs and policies and identifies future opportunities to progress outcomes for seniors in the Territory.

Specific Objectives

1. To provide advice to the Minister for Senior Territorians on seniors' issues identified by the Minister for Senior Territorians as being priorities for the NT Government.
2. To provide advice to the Minister for Senior Territorians on the appropriateness of governmental policies and procedures in relation to seniors and active ageing.
3. To provide advice and information to the Minister for Senior Territorians on other specific issues or matters of concern referred to it by the Minister for Senior Territorians relating to seniors and active ageing, which may include proposed policy and legislative changes.
4. To provide advice to the Minister for Senior Territorians about suitable ways to celebrate and enhance the role of senior Territorians in the community.
5. To develop a work plan that identifies priority issues of the STAC, as determined in consultation with the Minister for Senior Territorians, including ways to engage with the community on those issues and how the STAC aims to undertake its role and the support needs required. The STAC will report on the work plan biannually to the Minister for Senior Territorians.
6. To raise the level of community understanding of issues regarding senior Territorians, including active ageing, in the Northern Territory.
7. To be receptive to the diverse opinions, ideas and proposed solutions of people and organisations within the diverse cultures of the community.

Membership of the Advisory Council

The STAC's membership will be drawn from the community and comprise of nine members who are appointed by the Minister for Senior Territorians. Membership is open to Territorians aged 50 years and above.

Membership of the STAC will reflect the diversity of the Territory community which will ensure an equitable representation. The appointment criterion aims to achieve an equitable representation on the STAC by acknowledging the key areas as follows:

- Gender
- Aboriginal people
- People with a disability

- Members from other cultural groups
- Geographical spread

Application, Selection and Appointment Process

A request for expressions of interest in becoming a member of the STAC will be advertised. The principle underlying advertising STAC membership is to gain widespread community awareness of the role and opportunity to be a member of the council. Word of mouth and local community advertising are effective ways of generating interest and increasing access to local information.

Interested persons should submit an application in response to the request for expression of interest.

Applications will be considered by the Minister for Senior Territorians and applicants will be appointed based on consideration of a member's individual knowledge, networks and abilities and their ability to represent a wide and diverse range of experience, expertise, networks and interests relevant to ageing and older people.

A STAC member needs to be a Northern Territory resident and will be selected based on their willingness and ability to:

- reflect the views of senior Territorians;
- effectively consult with seniors, key seniors and community organisations and relevant service providers;
- provide advice on issues relevant to seniors and active ageing, which may include comment on Government policies, program and procedures;
- work collaboratively with STAC members on key issues for seniors to achieve positive outcomes; and
- increase their understanding of the practical, political and economic factors influencing services in NT.

Members are not appointed as representatives of particular interest groups, regardless of whether that interest group has nominated them as members and are not expected to represent the specific views or be accountable to any organisation

Role of Advisory Council Members

The role of all STAC members is to:

- provide high level advice to the Minister for Senior Territorians on issues regarding seniors and active ageing issues;
- engage the diverse views and opinions of the community regarding issues for senior Territorians and active ageing;
- create connections with key seniors and community organisations to facilitate their input to the STAC;
- represent the views and opinions of the community to the STAC and propose solutions ideas for identified issues;
- seek to increase the community's understanding of priority issues for senior Territorians, including active ageing;
- provide the community with access to up-to-date information on the STAC's activities and outcomes; and
- attend meetings of the STAC, either in person or by telephone or video link.

Role of Chairperson

The role of the Chairperson of the STAC is to:

- encourage input into the STAC that is diverse, offers creative ideas and solutions to seniors and active ageing issues;
- coordinate the development and implementation of a work plan for the STAC;
- coordinate the half yearly short summary report and comprehensive Annual Report;
- set meeting agendas and facilitate STAC meetings, with the assistance of the Deputy Chair. The Chair ensures that each agenda item is addressed appropriately, and assigns the item to the appropriate members for action and follow up; and
- represent the STAC in public forms. This duty can be assigned to other STAC members where appropriate.

Tenure of STAC Members

Term

Membership of the STAC will for a two year term. When a member is appointed to replace an outgoing member (who has either resigned or been removed from the STAC), the new member will serve on the STAC for a period equivalent to the remainder of the outgoing member's term.

Resignations

All resignations should be in writing and addressed to the Minister for Senior Territorians.

Removal from the STAC

The Chairperson of the STAC may recommend to the Minister for Senior Territorians that a member be removed from if:

- the conduct of a member is deemed by the Chairperson to not be conducive to the aims of STAC; or
- the member is absent from three consecutive meetings without reasonable excuse or notification.

Temporary Replacement of Members

Temporary replacement of members will occur by recommendation from the STAC Chairperson and the Director of the Aged and Disability Program to the Minister for Senior Territorians. This may occur where a member resigns pre-completion of the term and a period of time will elapse before a replacement is recruited and approved, or where circumstances cause the representative to be unavailable for a period of time. The replacement member should represent the same or similar skills, knowledge or locality as the previous member.

Where a member resigns or is removed from the STAC within the first 12 months of the STAC's term, the Minister for Senior Territorians may seek expressions of interest to fill the position for the remainder of the term.

The use of proxies to represent STAC members, who are on occasion not able to attend meetings, is not supported.

Confidentiality Issues and Conflict of Interest

STAC members and participants must be aware of the need for sensitivity and confidentiality in relation to matters addressed by the STAC, particularly related to issues that are sensitive or deal with individual experiences.

STAC members and participants must disclose a potential conflict of interest when it arises. As the purpose of the STAC is to provide high level strategic advice, rather than to

advise on narrow or individual issues, it is not expected that conflicts of interest will arise regularly. However, an example of a potential conflict of interest would be where the STAC proposed to recommend to the Minister for Senior Territorians that a particular NGO program should be receive increased funding, and an STAC member worked with that NGO.

Appointment of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson

The Minister for Senior Territorians will nominate and appoint a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson from within the membership of the Advisory Council. These positions will be announced at the first meeting of the STAC.

If the Chairperson resigns or steps down from the position during the term of the STAC then the Deputy Chairperson will take up the responsibilities of the Chairperson, until a Chairperson is appointed by the Minister for Senior Territorians.

Meeting Frequency and Process

It is expected that the STAC will meet four times a year with the discretion to hold meetings over one or two days. Advanced notice of meetings will be provided to support participation. Opportunity for meetings to occur outside of Darwin can be explored by the STAC and will be supported where practicable within the Northern Territory. Meeting will be a combination of face-to-face meetings and teleconference dependent on the meeting agenda.

Reimbursement and Support

STAC members will be fairly reimbursed for expenses associated with required and approved travel related to the essential business and work plan of the STAC.

A sitting fee will be paid to the STAC Chairperson. Other members of the STAC will not be paid sitting fees.

STAC members will be reimbursed on a cost recovery basis for any out of pocket expenses incurred whilst undertaking tasks allocated by the STAC in accordance with the work plan. Approval of these expenses will be through the recommendation of the Chairperson to the Director of the Aged and Disability Program for authorisation. This must occur prior to the expenses being incurred.

An annual budget allocation will be set aside for STAC activities. Funds will support associated travel, participation costs and secretariat support as required. The budget will be administered by the Director of the Aged and Disability Program.

The Secretariat (Aged and Disability Program) – will provide administrative support and other telecommunication, equipment, venue, catering and facilitation support as agreed in the work plan. Interpreters, teleconference, videoconference and other methods of support will be made available where possible to enable STAC members to attend meetings.

Work Plans and Reports

Within the first three months of the STAC's term, a draft work plan for the first 12 months of the term will be developed. The work plan will identify the priority issues of the STAC, including ways to engage with the community on those issues, and how the STAC aims to undertake its role and the support needs required.

Reporting on the work plan will be biannual and take the format of a half yearly short summary report and a comprehensive Annual Report that will be submitted to the Minister for Senior Territorians outlining the following:

- key initiatives and activities of the STAC;
- issues and achievements of the STAC in relation to community and consumer participation and work plan priorities;
- future plans and proposals;
- achievements and lessons learnt; and
- support needs of the STAC.

Media Guidelines

A positive relationship with the media can enable the STAC to inform the broader community about their work.

In relation to media comment, STAC members should be aware of the sensitive nature or confidentiality of an issue that might be raised. Media issues should be discussed with the Chairperson and the Director of the Aged and Disability Program in the first instance to identify the best person and approach for involving the media.

Evaluation Criteria

The STAC will be required to report against the activities and the time frames of their work plan as their evaluation. This will form part of the Annual Report.

Secretariat Support

Secretariat and other executive support to the STAC is provided by the Aged and Disability Program, which is located within the Department of Health and Families. The Secretariat will provide administrative, telecommunication, equipment, venue, catering and facilitation support as agreed in the work plan. Interpreters, teleconference, videoconference and other methods of support will be made available where possible to enable STAC members to attend meetings.

The Secretariat may also assist members with background research on issues referred to the STAC for consideration.

Contact Details

All correspondence to the STAC should be sent to:

The Chairperson

Senior Territorians Advisory Council
c/- Aged and Disability Program
NT Department of Health and Families
PO Box 40596
CASUARINA NT 0811

Phone: 08 8999 2508
Fax: 08 8999 2488