



## Expectations of CSMF Executive Committee Members

As a member of the CSMF Executive Committee, you will have the opportunity to advance the work of a small but effective organisation that has been in existence since the early 1990s. The organisation grew out of the NOMAD Working Group on OH&S which was a collective of WHS and Rehabilitation/Compensation officers in the Commonwealth and ACT governments concerned with the implementation of the NOMAD computer system. The CSMF gradually became a support mechanism for practitioners, and an advocacy group that liaised with Comcare and the SRC Commission to advance the practice of WHS and rehabilitation in the jurisdiction. In 2002 the CSMF became more formally organised as a not-for-profit organisation with a Constitution and it obtained an Australian Business Number (ABN) so that it could receive and disburse funds. It opened its membership to private organisations and individuals.

Since 2002 the CSMF has grown into a vibrant organisation which provides a support network for WHS and Rehab/Comp practitioners in both the ACT and Commonwealth governments, runs about four general meetings per year, an Annual General Meeting, and an Annual Conference attended by 130 delegates. It has a website, and works in partnership with sponsors, who provide about 50% of its annual funding.

As well as the four general meetings per year, the Executive Committee meets regularly in between those meetings (generally by telephone) to manage the affairs of the organisation and to plan for the future progress of the Forum.

### Expectations

As an Executive Committee member you will be expected to act in concert with other Executive Committee members to govern and manage the CSMF, ensuring that the Forum fulfils its responsibilities to its members and the wider community, as well as meet its legal and financial responsibilities.

You will be expected to:

- sign a contract between yourself and the Chair of the Executive Committee;
- provide personal particulars (such as full name, address, date of birth and possibly Tax File Number) to enable the requirements of government to be met, such as;
  - updating the ABN registration; and
  - disclosing any real or perceived conflicts of interest by way of a register of interests; and
  - completing bank documents to register your signature on the accounts.

- attend at least 75% of the scheduled meetings and/or events of the Forum, either in person or by telephone link;
- contribute to the development of policies and procedures to ensure the good governance of the Forum;
- undertake actions and activities to further the aims of the Forum, such as assisting in the organisation of the Annual Conference;
- be an ambassador for the CSMF and represent it where required.

## **Risks**

As a member of the Executive Committee of the CSMF you face similar legal liabilities as company directors, in spite of being a volunteer. According to the Australian Institute of Company Directors the legal risks can best be met by:

- having properly documented procedures, policies and record keeping in place to defend any actions against the organisation;
- training of Executive Committee members, especially if Committee members are volunteers without a business/financial/legal background;
- having an appropriate method of communicating with stakeholders and donors to ensure accountability;
- having Directors and Officers insurance if things go wrong.

The CSMF is continually upgrading its governance procedures and documenting its policies. It has Public Risk Liability Insurance for its meetings and Annual Conference, and has Association Liability Insurance to cover its Executive Committee members. Some members of the Executive Committee have attended seminars provided by the Australian Institute of Company Directors on the role of boards for not-for-profit entities.

## **Operational Matters**

While the Constitution grants decision making power to Full Members in general meetings, the Forum Executive Committee has always worked collaboratively regardless of the membership type of those on the Committee and no distinctions have ever been drawn as to the roles of the Committee members on that basis. The Chair is the coordinator only and works with all members of the Executive Committee to carry out the business of governing the Forum.

Financial Procedures have been formally documented. With regard to the operation of the Forum accounts, our new bank accounts provide a mechanism where all expenditure (other than via the Debit Card/Petty Cash Account) must be authorised by two members of the Executive Committee, ordinarily the Treasurer and Chair, and are included in a statement of expenditure provided to each meeting. Unusual items are discussed within the Executive Committee (eg Insurance cover), and as appropriate taken to a general meeting for approval (eg purchases of major equipment).

Reimbursements to Executive Committee members for expenditures made on behalf of the Forum are routinely referred to the Chair for approval, and again included in the statement of expenditure.

## Guidance

Accompanying this document is a copy of the Executive Committee Member's Contract, and a paper outlining the seven basic responsibilities of Executive Committee Members (adapted from an American paper by the US National Center for Nonprofit Boards).

If you are interested in further reading on the topic the Treasurer [treasurer@csmf.net.au](mailto:treasurer@csmf.net.au) has a range of documents (Australian and International) which can be forwarded to you.

## VERSION CONTROL

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