



Annette Downs
President
Tasmanian Regional Arts
9 May 2017

Letter to the Membership regarding confirmed closure of Tasmanian Regional Arts

Dear members, affiliates and supporters of Tasmanian Regional Arts,

I write on behalf of the TRA State Executive Committee (SEC) to notify you that a Special Resolution for closure of TRA was passed by a majority of 80% of the members at the Special General Meeting (SGM) held in Launceston on Sunday 7 May 2017.

This letter provides information to ensure that you fully understand the reasons why this has occurred, the process that was undertaken, what this result means for you as a member and supporter of TRA, and what the future may hold for regional arts support in Tasmania.

BACKGROUND

As you know, in 2016 TRA lost its operational funding from the Tasmanian Government through Arts Tasmania. Rather than rehash previous information you can access chronological TRA communiqués via the links below – noting that the final communiqué succinctly outlines the situation.

August 2016	Member notification regarding loss of funding
September 2016	Update to membership on Government campaign
January 2017	Notice of TRA's inability to trade in 2017
January 2017	Update on TRA's proposal to close at forthcoming AGM
February 2017	Letter to the Membership with more information on TRA's situation
February 2017	Information on rejected Tasmanian Government support packages
March 2017	Summary of outcome from the 4 March TRA AGM
April 2017	Membership update and joint Regional Arts Australia communiqué
April 2017	Public Notice, Agenda and Letter from President re: 7 May SGM

THE CLOSURE PROCESS

The carefully considered professional opinion of the voluntary member-elected SEC is that the loss of core operational funding, and the unsuccessful campaign to obtain secure funding from the Tasmanian Government, means that TRA is not in any position to service its state-wide membership or continue trading for the full 2017 year. Additionally, the SEC has not been willing to accommodate any scenario that would mean TRA trades whilst insolvent.

The TRA membership endorsed this professional opinion at a TRA SGM that was requisitioned by TRA members and held in Launceston on Sunday 7 May 2017. The Special Resolution for an orderly closure of TRA by 30 June 2017 was endorsed by 80% of the membership in a majority vote, with the distribution of any TRA assets also being voted upon by the membership.

With reducing resources, the SEC has undertaken an extensive rationalisation of TRA's operations over past months to limit all financial and legal obligations and downsize the organisation. The TRA SEC will now enact the closure procedure to wind up Tasmanian Regional Arts Inc. by or before 30 June 2017.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOUR BRANCH?

The overwhelming message from the SGM was that branches will continue to operate in the absence of the central 'umbrella' TRA administration. Further information can be found below relating to insurance, funding and branding for future TRA member activities.

Insurance

TRA branches are covered for insurance until 4:00pm on 30 June 2017.

If desired, branches will need to secure their own Public Liability and Voluntary Workers Insurance between now and 30 June 2017 to enable their activities to be insured after this date. Some helpful information regarding insurance for your activities can be found [here](#).

Due to TRA closing and reduced staff, if your branch has an insurance claim before 30 June 2017 please email SEC member Michelle Kaal on michellekaal@gmail.com.

Incorporation

If your branch wishes to become incorporated, relevant information can be found via the Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading website [here](#).

The Motion proposed by the members – approved at the SGM and consistent with our Constitution – determined that TRA's remaining assets will be divided between current financial TRA branches who are incorporated. To be eligible please provide your branch's Association Incorporation Number to TRA by emailing info@tasregionalarts.org.au before 5:00pm on 15 May 2017. Please also notify TRA if your branch is in the process of becoming incorporated.

Regional Arts Fund

Administration of the Regional Arts Fund (RAF) has been transferred to Regional Arts Australia. For enquiries on current or future funding applications please contact the RAF Officer by emailing tasraf@regionalarts.com.au.

Material Girl

The Material Girl touring exhibition will continue during 2017. Venue and date information can be found [here](#).

TRA branding

No TRA branch is endorsed to use the Tasmanian Regional Arts name, logo, or branding beyond 30 June 2017.

LEGACY

As a 70-year old organisation, TRA has held a pivotal role in shaping our society and nurturing the cultural fabric of Tasmania that we know and cherish today. A remarkable number of Tasmanians have engaged with TRA as artists, audiences, members and supporters. In its heyday, with multiple Regional Arts Development Officers working with our communities, TRA was a peak agency that enabled cultural

activity to flourish across Tasmania. We acknowledge all Life Members, staff and State Executive Committee members who have worked hard to provide support and service for TRA's state-wide membership.

Proposing closure of TRA has been difficult as we are all connected to this organisation and are passionate about support for the arts in our communities. We are heartened that we now enact upon closure with the majority support of our membership, closing with the respect and dignity that our organisation and its members deserve.

THE FUTURE

The regional artists, audiences and supporters from all walks of life who form our arts and cultural sector are creative and resilient. Yet ongoing, sustainable support for their cultural activity and creative practice is critically important. The outgoing SEC has secured a commitment from Regional Arts Australia and Arts Tasmania to commence regional consultations with the TRA Membership and the broader Arts community to envision a new strategy for regional arts support in Tasmania.

We are extremely disappointed that the Tasmanian Government has not been prepared to resource TRA to the level required to service a state-wide membership. We trust the Tasmanian Government will heed the SEC's campaign to the Minister for the Arts in December 2016 which reinforced that regional arts infrastructure is essential and requires sustainable and reliable resourcing to be effective.

There are many aspects to celebrate in TRA's legacy and people to thank – we will address these items closer to the final closure date.

Yours sincerely,

Tasmanian Regional Arts State Executive Committee:

Annette Downs	President
Travis Tiddy	Vice President
Sue Baker	Treasurer
Lee Cole	Southern Representative
Michelle Kaal	Northern Representative
Eleanor Austin	North-West Representative
Geoff Dobson	Co-Opted Arts Sector Representative
Melanie Bartlett	Co-Opted Legal Representative