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Welcome from Millie Nicholls

I'm Millie Nicholls.
I'm the current chair of the National Trust. I'd like to introduce our staff and a couple of Council members who are here. This is Laura Evans, who's the regional operations manager. I'm sure most of you have met her over there. We have Beverley Stacy, Senior Finance Officer. Victoria Pavliv, Finance Manager. Also here today are 2 Council members, Jo Lokan, who's sitting there, and Alison Stilwell, who most of you I'm sure, would know about. Last but not least, in fact most importantly is our new CEO, Nicola Di Lernia.
She's been with us 3 weeks and she is a breath of fresh air. She is very excited to be with us and you'll hear from her shortly.

Volunteer Awards

[See Attachments]

Branch Reports

[See Attachments]

Welcome from Nicolette Di Lernia, CEO

Thank you so much for that was a very delightful introduction and I'm so pleased to be here at this meeting and to be able to do this, this is my 4th week on the job.
So it's great to be able to do this so soon into my time at the National Trust, which I hope will be longer than Simon because I'm very aware that there's been quite a lot of change in the last few years and that can be very unsettling and also it leads to some maybe not such great decision making when we lose that corporate memory.

I think it's amazing we're making here at Naracoorte. I noticed that Naracoorte is described as a place where various Aboriginal communities and nations around this area all came together to meet, so it's very fitting that we're making here today and we've got people from across so many branches who are able to attend. Thank you so much for coming and thank you to those people who have joined us online.

My background is a I'm a registered architect. I grew up in Adelaide. I'm a typical Adelaide girl in that I now live in Goodwood but up until about six months ago, I lived within 10 minutes walk of where my parents spent all of their married life. My kids went to the same high school as I did. I married someone who lived around the corner from where my grandmother used to live.

I'm very proudly South Australian. I think SA is an amazing place. When I was growing up, even though my dad's Italian, we didn't go off overseas, we did holidays around Australia and predominantly around SA, so a lot of the places that are now part of my work life through the National Trust are places that I've been to on various holidays from when I was a very young child up until now.

As an architect, my predominant role was working on a lot of cultural buildings and education projects, so I've done quite a lot of work with buildings, not unlike the ones that you're grappling with and which the National Trust owns all round the state. I understand the challenges. I have some technical knowledge in that space, which I'm very happy to share.

I'm also married to Michael Queale, who some of you will have come across because he's the chief heritage architect for SA. So I understand when people say, Oh my goodness, looking after old buildings is a big, big task and inevitably, a very expensive one.

But I'm hoping that that background will be able to provide some value to the National Trust in the in the duty that we have to preserve, protect and promote our heritage. But it's not more about me in the in the magazine, so I might leave that that side of it, which you can read about for you to read about.

I would like to tell you a few things that aren't in the magazine article. I love volunteer organisations. I know that probably makes me a bit weird to some people, but there's something I feel really important community groups, and communities in general are really powerful things. I've been variously the manager of my son's soccer team up in Hahndorf, I've been on the Governing Council of my kids'
Primary and secondary school, I was on the Kensington Residents Association and was their treasurer for about 5 years so I I get the whole volunteer space.
I think it's amazing work that the volunteers do in all of these organisations, but I now that I'm CEO of the National Trust, I particularly love you guys.

But I really do mean - and you know this - this is a very important thing we do. We provide an amazing record and tell amazing stories about our state. We bring people together and we provided a big support mechanism as well as the core function for the National Trust, which is to tell stories about our heritage.
It's not just the things and the places, it's also the people.

I've now got adult kids so I can go out and about and see things and not have to be worried, you know, about coming home for stories and bedtime and all that sort of stuff anymore.

And that is very much what I am looking to do. I don't want to be a CEO that sits in Adelaide and doesn't know you. I want to get to know you. I want to know what you do. I want to know why you do it? I want to be able to talk to you about how we can perhaps workshop, how we do it better. It's what I do so as an architect, there's about as many ways to be an architect as there is to be a National Trust volunteer. I was always very heavily involved in brief writing and going into organisations and communities and finding out what it was that they really wanted to do and how we could best achieve that within the budget they had. And again, I think that's a very transferable set of skills to what I'm going to be doing with all of you good people.

Sorry, four week or 3 1/2 weeks in. I have clearly been to Ayers House because that's where we live now. I've been to Collingrove, Moonta. I went to the Hahndorf AGM.
I've been to Beaumont house a couple of times, once for Olive Fest and once to see the costume collection. I've had a tour around North Adelaide Baptist Church and met all the tenants there. I've been to Eden Valley to see a potential nature reserve.
I've been to Stangate House for the Fairy & Elf picnic, Penola, Keith and of Naracoorte now.

Tomorrow, we're going to Glencoe, Mount, Gambier and Kingston on our way back to Adelaide and I've had an invitation so far from Willunga, Victor Harbour and Mount Barker for activities over the next few months.

I am really very serious about getting out and spending time with all of you.
And being part of your endeavours to do what you think is important and to work with you.

There’s lots right here in your reports today and from the people online. Thank you so much. There is so much that we are doing.

There are so many things that you're all doing, there are so many ways that you are telling the stories of your place. Each of you are doing it differently because each of you have different stories to tell different tools to tell those stories with.

What we also need to remember, this has been a bit harder to hold on to, is that we're all part of one organisation called the National Trust of South Australia.

We are now in this wonderful 2025 environment, and things that we need to do as an organisation that are really important so that we can keep doing the work we do and do it well. In the last 18 months, the staff have been working really hard to put new systems in place to get better systems so that we can better do that job and do it more effectively and efficiently, and I know that sounds a bit odd when we are then coming out and saying to you, oh, but we want you to pay an Audit, Finance and Governance Contribution, because surely if we're doing things better and more efficiently, we shouldn't have to charge you anything.

And the answer is we should have been charging you for the real cost of doing all those things. Compliance and our financial obligations have been ramping up just as I have

for everybody progressively over the years.
And instead of coming out and being honest about the fact that doing business cost us money, for some reason. we have been pretending that's not a real thing. We can't keep pretending it's not a real thing anymore. We have to work together, a) to make sure that you guys have the right things in place to be able to keep doing what you're passionate about. And B) so that we can actually afford to do that properly and well.

We've just had our audit report done, we've come out with a really great scorecard. That's really important if we want to do things like ever borrow money, r go to people for grants. If we have an appalling financial audit record, let me tell you, we will get none of those things.

The other thing that we are facing, like everybody. -
Whose insurance for their house hasn't gone up in the last 12 months?
Mine certainly has. It's gone up 30%.
And unfortunately, everyone's insurance has gone up, so we have a double whammy and I know insurance has been talked about a number of times, but the reality is we were not insuring things correctly in the past.
Which is why instead of it looking like a 30% jump, it's actually a 60% jump because A) it's costing more and B) the real cost of insurance, so that volunteers if they get hurt, or somebody who's interacting with one of our sites and visiting one of our sites, if there's anything that goes wrong, we are covered.
We are not leaving you hung out to dry, that's not OK.

We've also had a big review of the value of our assets and that of course revealed that we were undervaluing a lot of things and now we have a much better value for the things that make us be able to operate. Can we still look at it and get it a little bit more refined? Of course we can, but this is not going to just magically go away.

It's our reality. We have to then work out how collectively we make enough money as an organisation to cover all these things. And I know that's pretty daunting at times, but it is absolutely our reality moving forward.

I would very much like you to work with us to be able to make that happen, because otherwise we won't - there's nothing that says the National Trust has to be a thing in South Australia. Moving forward, if we can't get to a point where we are a sustainable, financially independent organisation, we can cease to be, which we don't want, do we? We really don't want.

So.
Please work with us on that.

I am very happy to hear your war stories because I'm new and I know that you want to make sure that I'm aware of what's been going on, but having heard those war stories, I am not some kind of goldfish.
I am not going to forget and then do that same thing.
I am going to say “right, what have we learned from that and then what should we do as we move forward because we need to be better, we need to be better on a whole lot of fronts.”

Please tell me what you need to tell me and then make a choice.

We either keep talking about that stuff and some of the stories I've been told are at least 10 years old. Doesn't mean they're not important. Doesn't mean I don't need to know them. But if we keep talking about what happened 10 plus years ago.
Or even five years ago.

That distracts us from working out what we do next, and I think that's a real waste of our potential. And it, you know, we could do better. So please, I ask you to take that with you and think about how you tell me what you need to tell me.

And trust me, I know until I start doing things it's just words. But I would like you to trust me that we will not go back and do the same stuff that might have been the source of considerable anxiety and disappointment with the National Trust.

Plainly, the other thing we need to do is make money. And that's not just down to people in branches. We need to make money as an organisation.
And so a number of the things that have been happening over this last year to 12-18 months are things like a new membership system. That will allow us as an organisation to have a much more efficient way of communicating with you with recording your activities.

Things like recording financial transactions and then that will free us up to actually go out there and attract new members, which is really important.
That's one part of the puzzle, because we really love to increase membership.

That would be, a, you know, a pretty core objective. We also know that we need to activate our properties and we need to be activating in a way that reflects 2025 pricing and that can be confronting at times.

It's always hard to say. I'll look, you know, we've only ever charged $12.00 and now we need to charge 20. But there are some decisions like that. I think that, you know, the amount of work you people are doing to charge $8 and $12.00 entry fees. I think you you're worth more than that. I really do.

Things like impactful events where you're not doing a lot of little interactions six days a week, but you're doing something really impactful a few days a month. Let's think about whether that's a model that works for you. Short stay accommodation, external hire facilities. Let's see how we make all of those things work. And that's partly why I want to come out and see you all, because it's there's a lot of potential out there and we really need to harness it.

And the other thing that we're working on is getting back on track with targeted strategies for donations and grants. A lot of you are already accessing grants, which is amazing, really great work. They can be pretty big pieces of work.
Let's see how we can work on that and make that really impactful for the organisation and head office needs to be doing that as well. So I can we've got a lot of work to do. I reckon we're up for it.

Presentation by Victoria Pavliv, Finance Manager

Well hello, I'm Victoria. Many people know me from emails and phone talks.
I wanted to thank Tony and Branch for this hospitality, which is incredible.

And I will start my presentation with simple facts.
They may be well known to you, but I have to reiterate this and show to how important for us to understand what general business community sees, what the tax office thinks of us and what the ACNC sees.

So this is our ABN registration.
As you can see, one organisation which is registered under this ABN which is National Trust of South Australia. There is no ABN registration of branches. There are no departments, there is nothing else.

To report on this ABN, we are also registered as a charity at the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC). We also have deductible gift recipient status which we are maintaining, this gives us the right not only to receive GST free donations, but also pass this tax exemption status to our donors.

We must stay registered. That means that we have to meet all the requirements by ATO and ACNC we must comply with the government's standards and the governance standards. We must keep records. We must reporting annually. We must lodge tax return and comply with tax legislation and other accounting standards. We are doing this on behalf of every single branch, day, day in, day out.
Because without this compliance, we will not be able to do anything from the point of view of money.

Every quarter, we generate a BAS (Business Activity Statement). This is how our BAS for June looked. There is one number which is reported for GST income, one number for GST expenses, and the total tax owing to us is 1 number as well. That number includes 46 branches and head office.

This is the profit and loss statement from our audit.
Under these lines, there is nothing broken down, so there is no 46 income lines for individual branch. There is no 46 in expense lines for individual branches. So these report actually gets sent to ACNC the charity and non for profit status.
When you go to ACNC website, this is what it displays. It shows again the total numbers for the organisation, it tells the government, banks, whoever gives us grants, says well, this organisation actually makes profit or makes loss.
IT helps funding organisations make a decision whether or not we deserve to be paid a grant.

Using Xero transactions records things in one system because in the past we had 46 separate independent MYOV files. These MYOB files included just general numbers, which you would report to us and we will pass on to NFPAS, the external accounting firm.
There was no accountability, no granular detail, and it took a long time for NFPAS to combine the data in an individual file. It cost us over $300,000 per year to pay for the services and for the audit. And it took us about 2 1/2 months to audit the organisation with a huge list of inquiries and huge list of things we need to investigate.

So last year we decided to dismantle the system which we had in the past, and establish something new and with your help, huge help and cooperation, we've managed to to set up the Xero system.
We created a skeleton chart of accounts, because all branches are so different. You do admissions, you do donations, you do grants. You also sell honey, sell books, sell plants, for example.
There are so many avenues for us to raise income. But at the same time, we need to put these in a structure because only some branches sell books and only some sells honey. So we created the skeleton, and then have access to bank feeds in Xero, which is our bible. So the bank tells us what is your income and what is your expense on any given day we marry.

We marry invoices with the transactions which are shown in the bank. Xero places your income and expenditure in appropriate line. It also deducts the GST and we can run the reports required of us quickly, simply and accurately.

With your help, your cooperation, your open, we got the best audit feedback in a long time, and saved significant time and money. It also only took a couple of weeks, rather than months.

Presentation by Beverely Stacey, Senior Finance Officer

Thank you Naracoorte for your hospitality.
It's a beautiful part of the world. I haven't been here for years and I said to myself today I don't get out enough because I did a morning walk. I didn't go deep into the forest, but I had walked on the outside. It was just absolutely gorgeous.

So what I do is - I start the day with opening up my inbox and that has everybody's e-mail in it, so that's all of the branches to the left. So there's the main inbox where everybody's e-mail goes into.

So I file all the relevant branch accounts, and I run a spreadsheet call 'Current branch status' and this was really designed to remind me where I've sent emails and where I've sent reminders.

And I appreciate your patience and I'm sorry if I do repeat myself, but I'm just trying to get it right. I don't want to forget anybody. I don't want to not get something right. So I also run a file of that lists all of the term deposits and everyone's bank details and also some GST notes that show what GST is on and what it's not on.

So then I go into my responses and I respond to the ones that I'm waiting on 1st and and basically clear them off, put them in the finished folder.

This is an example of an income clearing account. When I'm opening up everybody's bank account, all of the received money goes into just one big bucket, which is called the income clearing account. So whatever income comes in, it recognised there's a rule that I've set up so I'm not going in and typing from scratch, I've set up things that are quite quick.

So it all goes into this one bucket. Then at the end of the month, when I ask you for your breakdown of allocation, I then need to do a journal entry.

Ceduna have very kindly said that I can show their figures and their account, which gives you a bit of a snapshot of what I do.

That's how simple Ceduna's is – we see the income. I've got the three expense receipts, and then I move on to the income clearing account. Ian has written on his bank statement where the income should be allocated to, and in this case Ian's perfectly equals what has come into the bank.

We run a cash system – so if you've got $300 that didn't get banked, we can't report on it. We have to report exactly on what's in the bank. I know it's difficult because banks are closing faster than they're opening, so it does make it a little bit difficult, but if it's really important for you to have that money in your figures, please get into the bank. We don't do an accrual basis and we can't include it in those figures.

With that income, which is $350 in this case, I do a journal and that's to take it out of the income hearing account and to pop it in to the allocation. For Ceduna this is really simpe, but for some branches it's quite extensive. It can be 3-4 A4 pages.

I want to give a couple of examples of what how people send their income allocation to me, and it's not necessarily complex. The first example is an email, with four lines of text that perfectly what's in the income. If it doesn't balance, I will send it back. I'll give you a screenshot of what's in the income clearing account and it has to match.

This is another spreadsheet that I get from another branch, which is lovely. It's it is quite extensive, it's all handwritten, it's all hand added up, but it comes into the dollar.

Some other hints – this is the ABN lookup, which is important to be aware of. Some suppliers have been giving branches ABNs that aren't valid, or aren't registered for GST. They might give you an invoice that says GST inclusive, which means they might be getting the extra 10%, but if we can't claim it because their ABN says that they're not registered for GST. This means you're actually paying more money than you should be. So you need to take it back to that supplier and get them to either adjust their figures or make clear that it's GST inclusive.

I go from A-Z in this inbox every day, I push banking over every day, so I'm always looking. I'm always looking in the banking and I'm probably always asking questions. I'll sometimes ask questions before the month's ended. I'm generally probably ahead of the ball now as opposed to being behind the ball, but I do appreciate everyone helping me because I am new and I'm still learning things and I don't think I know it all.

I'm trying so we all want to work together and as I said, it's such. It is such a wonderful thing that National Trust does and I absolutely love the work that volunteers do and the time they put in because I'm volunteer myself!

Questions for Beverley:

What do we charge GST on?
A: Donations are GST free, but generally income has GST. Such as sales, unless it's a second hand good that you've done nothing true. So if it's a second hand good that you've brought in, you've fixed up. You've painted it, you're selling it GST.

Many categories have very specific rules on GST. In terms of suppliers, they have to be registered with an ABN and for GST.

If someone doesn't have an ABN, they need to fill out a statement that says their services are a hobby – this is available from the ATO.

GST refunds are paid to branches in line with BAS schedule.

"Admission by donation" is not eligible to report as a donation, it must be reported as admission. Admission is a service or a benefit, which means it is not a donation.

Branch Portal Launch & Explainer

Afternoon, everyone. My name's Laura. I'm the regional operations manager for the National Trust of SA in my region is all of South Australia.
Over the last 18 months, I've been hitting the road, meeting lots of people. There are lots of familiar faces in here and one of the main pieces of feedback that we've heard is "what's the policy on this? Where's the form on that? Who do I contact for this?"

Over the last few months, myself and Leanne, who is our business manager have been working on creating a resource library and that you have access to. Hopefully you've all seen it in the various branch newsletters that have come out, but we wanted to do show and tell of things that are in there and also hear about some things that might not be in there that we could start working on.

The resources that are in here are all about how to run your branches, things that you might know already, but this is your one stop shop library for "How to do the National Trust?", so we're all literally on the same page.

We've included the operations manual, the finance manual, copies of policies for the National Trust, so things like anti bullying, child safe environment Forms and templates.

Some of the resources that we've built in here, include donation form, membership form working before incident reports for bodily injury. Hopefully none of you ever have to use these and the same thing for property reports. This is really helpful to do with insurance. You know, window gets broken, maybe we're like the Louvre and something gets nicked! Hopefully you don't have to use these, but they are your best port of call.

We have some templates that have proper branding that are all set up, to make your lives a lot easier so we're not going to be reinventing the wheel. The other reason that we wanted to set this up was to ensure continuity. We know that people move on from the National Trust and the template that they might have used is on their computer and that computer is now with them in the Bahamas! So this is the centralised resource, so you don't have to worry about that stuff being on people's personal drives as well

The other question I get asked a lot is about logos, so the style guide is on here with the colours of the National Trust, the fonts, the logos etc. IT also includes how to use them, and design ideas for inspiration to work some harder, not harder and make sure we're having a consistent look and feel across the organisation because that's one of our big powers is as a collective.

Q&A Session

Insurance

Question from Naracoorte re Insurance:

We've got a pretty valuable building in the old mill. It would be virtually irreplaceable insurance. What do we do?
Nicolette: Look, I think it's fair to say that we are about to go into another insurance review and I think those are some questions we are going to keep working with all the branches to make sure that we get that right balance between what the thing is worth to replace and whether it is replaceable, and how we we might value things depending on that.
While it may be a valuable building, while it may be irreplaceable if it, you know, literally became a pile of bricks on the ground, in which case you know that the minimum insurance value we would look for any of our properties is for demolition and site clearance because that allows us to then site clearance.
But because it's an old mill building, even if it gets a big fire in it, and the timber structure burns, there is likely to be a whole lot of remaining structure that can be rebuilt. Not guaranteed, I know, but you could have a fire or a big leak or something and we still need to have the capacity to be able to rebuild part of that building if it is partially damaged and still recoverable.
So it is a matter of finding that right balance and we want to work with you.
But it's not going to be a one-size-fits-all formula for all of it. We are going to need to talk to all of our branches and get your input on value of collections, value of the property, number of volunteers, number of hours they work, because if we can get that granular information we can make sure that you're paying insurance in a real way and not just paying to make sure that we're covered with a big risk margin.

Millie: We've been discussing it for about 12 months now, because lots of complaints. The thing I think you've got to remember too is that if it isn't properly insured and there's a fire and you lose it, how's your community going to react to that?

Question about collections, and what we should be valuing?
Millie: That’s what we’re working through in the review, to make sure we’re giving you the best advice.

Jo Lokan: One thing we also do need to remember about insurance is, is if you have items on loan.
Yes.

Millie: That is another thing that is need to be thought about – if you got something on permanent loan, and it's not donated to the trust, essentially it's not covered by our insurance.

So I think if you do have things on loan, I think you need to think about whether you really need them or whether you should be returning them to the family that have loaned them to you .

Laura Evans: And when we talk about loans, there's a important distinction between loans from an individual and loans from a collecting institution. So we are really trying to discourage permanent loans from individuals.
Because then things get very murky. Either the National Trust owns it or it's on a short-term loan. I would like to discourage the idea that the National Trust is a storage place for people's stuff. If you are generous enough to want to show it to the public, that's lovely. We are happy to facilitate that.
But if we're taking the responsibility of putting, programming or displays around it, then let's get that legal title right and we’re not a garage.

Millie Nicholls: We just had a case where a fairly large item, which we thought belonged to us, we've suddenly had a letter saying it belonged to someone in Holland. And what you know, are we looking after it well enough? That's not really where we want to go. And we didn't know - none of us. I mean people.
50 years ago, might have known, but we certainly didn't today.

Jo Lokan:
Up at Beaumont House, we have three large portraits and they're massive and they've been on loan For probably 30 years from a family now, but there was no money allocated along with those portraits for the upkeep and care of them, the frames are now starting to disintegrate and we've been asking the question, who's responsible for that?

Graham from Naracoorte: Further to that, for insurance forms, have you got a form at all?
Yes, that will be something that goes on the branch portal.

Penola:

Our biggest problem with insurance is the excess is $10,000, yeah, so.
For the fee, well, the.
So what we we've had a leaking roof, luckily didn't turn out too bad, so we're going to fix it. It cost us $8000, which wouldn't be worth claiming.

Millie: That's the complication. If you lower the excess, to $500 or $5000, the premium goes right up, which is already high in people’s minds.

Nicolette: It's a really delicate balance. Some of those places, like Sharam’s cottage for example, I mean, it's an amazing, it's an artefact in its own right, but if you reproduced it using some new logs and some, you know reproduction wallpaper, would it be the same? It probably wouldn't. We are custodians of some pretty unique things and that makes this whole conversation, you know, a very unique conversation.
How do you we set that value at a sensible one? And what do you replace and what do you then have to record so that if it does get lost, you have some meaningful record of it?
It’s a good question to be asking ourselves because in that recording process, we could also be setting up some amazing resources that we can then use in different ways. But the physical artefact is still our primary focus is to keep that safe.

Victoria:
The timeline for insurance renewal is date 31st of March. So that is when everything's signed and sealed and two weeks after that we have to make the full payment.

We intend to start work much earlier, we will email and we intend to involve you more on a bigger scale. In November will e-mail to you the data which currently is listed for branch – building, the valuables and number of volunteers, the basic things which impact on the cost of insurance.

Let’s be strategic and ensure only the things which we are sure of a value which we can claim back.

Communications

Question: Suzy Reiche
Yes. Sorry. Yep, sorry. Two things. When emails go out to the treasurer, I know it'll go out to our Treasurer's personal e-mail address, but can it also just come to our generic branch mailbox?

Laura: Our e-mail system, like any e-mail service, like that strongly prefers 1 e-mail per person.
So it won't send an e-mail twice, even if it’s listed against two different people. So if you are Bob and Jill Smith and you share an e-mail, tt won't send one to Bob and one to Jill. It will just send it to one person. We understand that that’s how lots of people have set

up their emails, but no e-mail server in the world will send it to the same address twice because it counts as spam.

So we don't want to risk missing people by saying, “Oh yes, we’ll always make sure we add in these people manually for Penola, and a different set up emails for Willunga but remember to add this one-“ So we send it to the person who is nominated for a particular role.
And we ask that if you do share an e-mail, please draw it to the attention of the person that it was intended for.
In most cases we are trying to send things to treasurers and chairs because we know that some people are better on their emails than others or chairs and secretaries or chairs and whatever. So there's at least two points of contact.

Membership

Questions: Suzy Reiche

Is it official that membership fees are not coming back to branches? Our treasurer mentioned she didn't think that there'd been a formal communication about that, and we just wondered whether we could have a formal e-mail advice to say this is what's happened. Just so we've got that on record.

Millie: Yes, we can send a formal advice on that.

Volunteer Registration

Question:
I have another question about the working with children check, has everyone done that? I haven't, we don’t work with children.

Laura: So the volunteer registration process has been live in the network for a year and we made the decision to meet volunteers where they are. So if you are a person who can jump on to the web application and the Department of Human Services and do your own working with children, check.
Your hardest if you can't, because I personally have fought the Department of Human

Services website quite a number of times.
We can meet people where they are. So if you want to fill it out in person, if you let us know, we're gonna put, we can apply for a paper form for.
You.
Yeah, beautiful. It's whether you need, whether you need it. Yes, please.
In short.

Nicolette:
We don’t run a school or drive a bus or do things maybe that are obviously working with children, but because we're volunteers sometimes we're in a position where we're supervising young adults who might not appear to be children, but they're still under the age of 18 and if something goes wrong and we don't have that check, consequences are pretty stupendous. So I know a lot of you think this is not something that applies to me. I'd rather not have to do another piece of paperwork.
But please, please, can we do them?
I had a working with children check when I was managing my son's soccer team, mainly because my son and his friend were both 17 at the time. All the others were in their early 20s, although they behaved a lot of the time like they were 12. But you know, it was still, it was still important that I have that piece of paper for the organisation and for my own personal security,

Laura: Another thing about the working with children check is that it lasts five years and that is one of the reasons why we chose that over a working with vulnerable people. Check, because that only lasts 3.
And we thought if you're going to do it, let's get the longest lasting 1.
It.
Is free to complete, and it covers vulnerable people as well.

Question:
If people can't do it on their own, they've got to go through you?

Laura: Yes, so we how it works is we write an e-mail to a Department of Human Services and says, “Dear DHS - Millie is one of our volunteers. This is her date of birth. We kind of request an exemption form for her.”

They send us back the paperwork with their numbers on it, we send it to you and away you go.

The other important thing to know is that the working with children check follows you. So the results will be returned to you, you can use it for other organisations.
We don't get notified of the outcome of it because it is an identity check. We are not the government, they don't tell us the outcome of it. So if you've done it, we need to get the proof of it. But the notification goes to the individual. The same with the outcome of the police check - it goes to the individual.
Some branches have done a bit of a bee, got everybody in a room and with the JP and said right, we're all going to do it together.
I've been up to Renmark and registered about 15 people in one hit.
We can meet you wherever you are on this. We've done over the phone. We.
We are really committed to be making this work for people, whatever your resources are. So if you're having trouble please talk to us.

How long does it take to get back?
It varies on the persons. It can vary if you've had multiple names in your lifetime, if you've lived in multiple countries.
The upper limit should be 6 months and depending on what else department of Human Services have on the shortest has been a couple of days.

Nicolette: This first year is going to be the big one because we're getting a whole lot of things put in place.
For those of you who've got all your volunteers registered and on the portal, we may not have to ask you that information because we can look at the information when we have online and actually see that really easily and not have to bother people with information we can find out ourselves. We're not trying to be Big Brother and spy on you, we are trying to do this so that we can actually get these settings right, so that we have the right people protected and you're paying the right amount of money.

Millie: Can I just ask is it important to have the hours of volunteer hours?

Laura: Yes! We know it's not the same for all volunteers. So if you can give us those actual numbers that would really help.

Question: Naracoorte:
This is because I haven't managed to get along to these meetings for a while now, but there was a time for personal insurance that it didn't cover you cover any of the workers or members over the age of 80.

Laura:
It does now, we wanted to make sure of that, but it has impacted the premium. That is one of the changes that we made to repair to the policy. However, it is a standard of the insurance industry that payouts change with age, that is just the world.

On the branch portal, you saw the incident reports, those are critical to fill out we need as much information in a situation were something were to occur, we need an incident.

And this is all part of the volunteer registration as well, because our insurers would, I'm sure, look at a situation where if someone wasn't registered and had been undertaking non-approved work like up a tree with a chainsaw without a ladder, at 84 or 24, that's not an approved work activity – that might not get a good result in a pay out.

Nicolette: The other thing you'll need to be aware of, is people who are office holders in your branches, is that if somebody who is volunteering on an activity that you are running is not registered hasn't got the right paperwork in place and they hurt themselves - you can be held personally liable under Australian Work Health and safety legislation. We don't want to put you in that position, I really I don't. You know, we're not making these rules, but they're there and we need to understand them. And we want you to be protected. So please, please. I know it's tempting to say, oh, it won't matter this time, all it takes is one incident and they will go you for not being a proper authorised person doing the right thing.

I've come out of the construction sector environment and unfortunately you see some pretty silly things happen there - people up on second floors with no safety equipment no full protection and you know if they fall and you've seen them and you haven't reported them, even though I'm the architect and I'm not their boss, and in fact, I'm not even their bosses boss, I still have a duty of care to that person. It is not a very forgiving piece of legislation, and it's not until it applies to you that you actually understand how unforgiving it can be. So you know, again, I'm not trying to be a scaremonger, but please, we are trying to do these things to protect you, our volunteers, cause we really do want you to be able to volunteer and not have to stress about stuff.

Donations, Admission and GST

Question: How should we record donations in kind? Or donations of services? Do they attract GST?

Nicollette: The reason why donation at the door, when you then go in and see the museum gets viewed technically as we're providing them with a service and so that's why a donation at the door needs to go from GST.

Whereas if you got the same amount of money because you are having a stall at a, stall at a local fair or something, that would be GST free because you haven't provided a service in response, so it's all about actually thinking about what the GST is there for. And if it's something like that a pro bono thing, a free thing, you don't have to worry about GST, but it's a very good way of getting things, and I hope you're give them a good thanks.

Question: Maureen from Kingston SE:
We didn't have to pay GST for years and years, why do we have to do it now?

Answer:

Question: Maureen from Kingston SE - At what point is the 7.5% Admin Fee applied? It can be a lot on top of ticket fees, gst, merchant fees etc. Is the GST considered Gross, are we paying an Admin Fee on GST?

Answer:
Nicolette: Firstly, we have to look at each branch as a business, and look at the real cost of doing business. We are strongly encouraging branches to look at what they charge,

At the moment it's being levied on gross income, I think there's scope to look at this at a council level so you're not being penalised for being a good job, but we have some branches who are not spending responsibly.

I know sounds a little bit like primary school, but I'm thinking that if you do the right thing and follow the finance policy in your branch and get permission for spending.
And I'm not saying we're gonna, you know, sit on you like you know, sorry, but if you, if you if over there's a certain amount of money, you get permission and you talk to us about how you put your business case together and why you're spending.
Is there any spending over?

Millie:
The other thing we have to we're looking at is looking the actual prices that we charge for things. We have one museum that I know of that charges $3.50 entry fee. Now that is ridiculous in today's world. You just can't survive on $3.50 entry fee they might.
I know in Claire we charge $5.00. So now $5.50, it's not enough. We have to charge more. This business has lost money, I think for 20 years, I'd say, I don't know when they last made money, we have to, we can't go on forever like that. And some branches do that very well. Others don't do it at all. And I'll be first to say that Claire doesn't. So yeah, that's something we'd probably look at.

Maureen:
We started off this morning looking at the organisational structure and how we operate under one ABN, when I look at the other organisations around our town, like Rotary or RFDS, there isn't one that is charging GST. They operate under a couple of different structures, but even though their head organisation is registered for GST. Most of them do not make $75,000 so I believe that in the legislation, you will see that under a certain structure a head office can be registered for GST and operate under that structure. Can we get a ruling from the ATO for clarity?

Answer:
Some of the other organisations named aren't providing a service – so for example, the RFDS local groups are purely fundraising organisations, instead of being the medics themselves. They get declared a sub-entity because their activities are different to main organisation. Rotary work a little differently again, dividing their funds between charitable fundraising and club costs.

Branches can't be registered as sub entities – their activities aren't considered different enough from the central organisation.

Question – Paddy from Willunga:
I was in Sydney when a museum there went from free to charging and it said mission clutters. I was in South Australia when the South Australian maritime started charging and its admission plummeted. Now I think it's a very short sighted thing to think. Oh, we get ex people through the door and we only charge this much. The thing is.
Let's face it, a lot of Australians will not cross the road to go to a museum, you have to coax them in. What we have found, is we don't charge for bulk for our museum experience. Where do we get our money from?

Donations and we sell stuff. And in fact, by doing that we get a lot more money than we ever did when we charged.

Nicolette:
I think it's also really important when we're thinking about this, do we charge people or do we not? Because I understand what you're saying.
It's about who do we charge and what do we charge for. So maybe museums for members are free, doesn't matter where you go, they're all free if you're a member. But if you're not a member, then what are we charging? If the cost of membership can't be justified against the cost that you would pay if you are not a member, then that starts to become a tricky conversation. Why would you be a member? I can get in, I can go to all the places I want and it still costs me less than my membership fees.

Millie: And it also comes back to what we're offering - if they won't cross the road to come to the museum, perhaps we need to change what we're offering in the museum. And I'm not referring to any museum in particular, but it comes to your special things like you know, train trips at Moonta or down mine sites or whatever it is and murder at the museum, or special events.

Question: Is interest from investment accounts counted as part of gross income?
Yes, yes, it is part of your income.

Question:
Previously about the portion of the membership fee not being returned to the branch.
Laura said that she would provide an official notification to the branches of that.
How are you going to notify the general membership?

Laura: By email!
So let's be clear about what we're talking about. First of all, there wasn't, at least in recent years, a cash return to branches. The way that it was calculated was as a discount on the insurance bill.

One of the reasons we removed it is that we had some branches in position where if you took it literally, State office owed a refund on insurance to branches and then there's still a portion of the insurance that actually needed to be paid, so state office was still carrying the dollar invoice of the insurance. Port of Adelaide is a good one. They had so many members that they presented their invoice bill was 0 and in fact it

should have been minus something.
And we thought that's not showing anyone the cost of doing business.

Nicolette:
And we are aware that we have been some interesting behaviours in the past.
And like I said earlier, we would love to know where we can do better by you know, sometimes that's through saying this does not make sense, but there is a point where if we want to pursue every one of these previous behaviours and get a monetary payout for them, and I'm saying generally across the board.

If we do that and we you all want to have your $0.50 worth, there will be a point where we have to say thank you, National Trust Members, we have now closed as an entity and we are closing the doors and I'm not being a drama queen.

I am saying this as an absolute reality. We are a farm.

We are asset rich and cash poor. We would love to be the other way round. We have all of these amazing properties and things, they'll cost a lot to keep up. We totally get it. We are on a journey to try and get to a point where we can actually pay our way without doing the current rain dance that we do, which is that somehow we'll get a grant just at the right time, or someone will leave us money that is not a sustainable model. It's worked in the past, and we certainly don't want to get go back to getting government handouts because all it takes is one change of a political decision and then suddenly you've set your budget on where you get this much a year and you get nothing.
So we need to be able to pay our way, so that when those other things happen they are a bonus. Does that make sense to people?

Mark: Is State office going to notify members at large as well?

Nicolette:
All right. Well then if we've changed the rules, then maybe we do need to just let all the Members know this is. This is why we're doing it and this is what we're doing now.

We have been running at a hundreds of thousands of dollars of deficit a year, I don't know why no one has told you that as an organisation, not just head office or any one part of it. As an organisation we have run at a significant deficit every year for the considerable amount of time.

If we don't change what we do we will not be able to be here.

Financial Position of NTSA

Mark, Willunga:
When this insurance bill came this year, we lost our share of the membership discount. Now we have 50 members. So we lost something like $1300.
Our insurance went up by 66%.
Suzy pointed out to you in the statement that meant our insurance raised from $3000 to $5000 and at the same time service fee came in. At that stage we were rated as having $60,000 in turnover, and I was at the meeting in April when this was said to branches in the city. Right. Our rating for the Service fee at that stage was 10% of $60,000 or $6000 a year. Now, $6000 a year plus $1300 a year, now that was a little believably high amount of money.

Nicolette:
And it's all coming in one big hit. I can see exactly why there is dissatisfaction about this. It doesn't change the root cause of why we're having to do it. I think if it could have been done in a more gradual way, that would have been, you know, easier for people to adjust to. I totally get it. And I look, I'm sorry, I'm not meaning to frustrate you. I'm not.

Mark: Yes, but the branches are not the ones who have this debt. We're not the ones-

Millie: No, that's because we've been carrying the branches. The head office has been carrying the branches for a long time. We've been paying all these expenses of things like the accounting, the auditing, all those sorts of things we've been carrying for years.

Millicent: We believe we've had invoices that said administration cost, and insurance, and only very recently too, within the last 18 months.

Victoria: We have seen examples of previous invoices, before this team started, that were labelled 'Insurance and Administration'. We have looked into these, and it was a poorly written invoice. It was only for insurance, it matched the tables of insurance values.

Nicolette:
We are all part of the same organisation.
Yes, there are frustrations. If you are going to get all blah about everything, the

chances are that people aren't going to want to be able to help you because they're going to be afraid of you.

Can we please, please try and work together on this? I'm not saying we will always have the answer you want. I'm not saying it will always be the most comfortable conversation, but we need to have conversations and not kind of badminton matches if we can. If we can, please.
We are all on the same side, even though you may not believe it at the moment. So please can you work with us? Not at us, because we will be able to do much more for you if we're not having these great long argie bargie conversations we want to be able to give you as much information as we can. This is not 15 years ago. This is not five years ago. This is now. It is different now because I want it to be different now.
And God help me. I'm the CEO, so I can actually do this for once, so please work with us.

Question: Sharron, Moonta.

I've been in the Moonta National Trust as long as what Nicolette has been, and my branch, I think summarises what the anger and a lot of people are feeling about the finances, the resources.
And I think our branch is actually shocked to hear that the National Trust wasn't in good shape. What would help everyone's understanding is, was the board aware that things weren't going well for a long period of time? Has there been misappropriation of funds? I've heard comments about CEOs that have come and gone, but is there any explanation as to why it is that the trust has kind of got itself into a big hole that we all have to help get out.

Millie:
I worked at the Trust in 1972 and I don't think it's ever been healthy. I think that there are times when it's looked better than other times. One of the things we've decided, Sharon, is to get it into a healthy position.

And to do that, we have to be fully accountable for everything that's spent. There's no misappropriation of funds. I know that some of Moonta members think that some of the money that was spent at Moonta was not spent appropriately,

I have talked to the architect. I have talked to some of the other people involved and

there is no problem there. It is like we got the money in 2019, I think, and we didn't spend it until 2023-2024. So that makes a big difference in what you can buy with that amount of money.
So that was one of the issues.

Sharron:
I guess I'm not actually talking about Moonta, specifically. It seems like everybody within the room has got the same feeling which is, how are we here?

Millie:
If you've ever read the annual report, you'll see that the only way we've actually made money is to increase our asset base, and we've done that over a long period of time and we've never really had any cash. We are asset rich and cash poor. We could be very rich tomorrow if we sell our assets.

I think there's a temptation to do that, but that's not what we want to do because it if you sell the back paddock on the farm all the time, you end up with no farm and that's my attitude towards it. I want to make the farm pay. I don't want to sell the back paddock.

Nicolette:
There's a couple of things that I've observed in my whole 4 1/2 weeks here. Well, and it and some of them are observations from previous organisations I've been at.

Some people find it very hard to admit that things aren't going particularly well, so they would rather give you what they think you want to hear rather than what you need to hear. I think that's not very productive for as you can probably tell because I've told you what I think you need to hear, to understand why we're doing what we are doing.

I also think some people find it very hard to say no.
It's a really useful word, no. So I had somebody Monday this week try to give me a church with a very large slate roof, it's gonna cost $1,000,000.

It's a wonderful, wonderful church. But. We don't need another church with $1,000,000 repair bill attached to it. We need to be able to say no and unfortunately in the past we have said yes to a whole lot of things that in retrospect we should probably have said no to. So you put the accumulation of all those things together and we kind of stumble from one near miss to the next we need. We need to change that setting and it is going to be a bit painful. But you know, I think we can do it. There is so much potential here. I gave up a perfectly good job that I really enjoyed to do this because I really relish this opportunity to do this, as you know better than we're doing it now.

And that's not to say that you're not working really hard and doing great things, but we need to be better. So that's where I'm coming from. I really, really think this is worth giving a red hot crack to. And yes, I'm sorry there is going to be a bit of pain and discomfort in the process.
But that's it's not easy what we're trying to do, it's actually quite hard, but it is doable.

Victoria:
I've worked for two years with National Trust. I came to a very poor shape financial system. In that time, I and the team made a gigantic effort, costing us a lot of time and energy. But we made a change. We are moving somewhere.
We need your support, at least you know your moral support.
Yes, I'm a paid employee, but I invest a lot of my time to these job, so please be with us. Help us survive these times and come to a better future.

Nicolette:
And so we're now in a position to thanks to all this work that's been done that squirrelling away bits of money and not being able to work out where it went should be a thing of the past. There should not be no squirrelling a) because we don't think it's a nice thing to do and b) because you can see your own accounts and track things. And if we're getting stuff wrong talk to us about it. Please. Not in a, not in a shouty way, we've looked at the books and this isn't the way we think it should be. We need to have a conversation.

Collections – Establishing Significance of Objects and Removing from Museums

Naracoorte:
We all have a collection. Sometimes we have far too much. Is there a way to circulate items that other branches might want more?

Laura:
We have a member of staff, Felicity, who is the collections and built heritage coordinator. She comes to us from national trust UK.
And she and I have been working on using CatalogIt, which is the online database. Several branches have taken it up. Kingston is one of them.

So that if you use it. then you can see what the other branches have. It’s to take some time for everyone to get on there.

What we have developed in the meantime as a resource for branches is a significant assessment document. So we've tried to make it as jargon free as humanly possible. But it allows you to print it off, go to the object in your collection and assign it a letter grade based on a few conditions. Such as how many of these do we have? Do we know who gave it to us? Is it in a condition that we would display it in? Can we repair it? And if it's, you know, is it poisonous? Things like that.

And if it's in that scale and it's, you know, A or B, Yep, let's consider keeping it if it's below, then then we'll recommend it for de accession from the collection.
Which means we have a few choices about what you do with it. You can try and return it to the donor. You can try and give it to another institution in the network. You can try and give it to someone else, and the very last two options are you can try and sell it, but the money has to be reinvested in collections. Or you can dispose of it as waste.
So we're trying to give you the tools because you know your collections much better than I ever will. The form designed to do it one item at a time, but you might want to deal with boxes of things at a time or types of things. When I worked for the history trust we did a big deaccession project and I had a whole 10 pages of spoons
And we dealt with them as one set of items rather than having fifty different forms.
We are developing those resources for you because having been around the state for the last 18 month there are some amazing things in our museums, but there is also a lot of repetition.

Millie: I was at a talk recently where the woman asked, you really need to think about what's important to your community, what are the things that matter, what are the stories that you want to tell?
Talk to your community. Make that decision and then keep what fits that what you decide and get rid of the rest. We do not need 1000 irons.

You can refuse to accept things, though I understand it's very hard to do that when people come in in person. But that that's something we've gotta deal with.

Nicolette: They may be a case that we go look, we do have this many of this type of thing and they're all made of this type of material and actually the best thing we can do for the National Trust and the planet is to get all of that stuff taken away and recycled. Because we do have a lot of things and some of the things are actually getting in the way of us seeing the really important objects. But we don't necessarily just want to take them to the dump either.

And you know, if it's a whole lot of copper stuff, it's worth a lot of money! The same with steel.

Cliff – Naracoorte:
It would be great if Head Office could develop resources for museum trails around the different regions!