

Public Officer's Report for Annual General Meeting - 17 August 2026

The Role

In New South Wales, a Public Officer for an incorporated association is the official administrative link and legal point of contact between the group and the state government. They must be at least 18 years old and live in NSW. [1, 2]

Key Responsibilities

- **Official Contact:** Receives legal documents and official notices for the association and passes them to the committee.
- **Notify Changes:** Tells [NSW Fair Trading](#) about any official address changes within 28 days.
- **Document Custody:** Holds association documents safely as required by the group's rules.
- **Handover Tasks:** Collects records from past committee members to give to new ones or returns all files within 14 days if leaving the role. [1]

As noted in our Secretary's Report changing our legal structure has been an enormous amount of work, resulting in our CSO having a new Name, new ABN, new bank accounts, new web domain added, new tax exemptions as well as reapplying and receiving Charity Status under the ACNC.

Further details:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/business-and-economy/incorporated-associations/starting-an-incorporated-association/role-of-public-officer>

The main administration for application for Incorporation involved:

- completing online forms and payment of fees
- applying for a new ABN
- updating the Constitution in November 25 and February 26 with associated notifying of the Department.
- completing the application for Charity Status with associated policy development etc.
- applying for Tax Exemption and DGR Status which was approved
- closing all bank accounts and cards and establishing new accounts in our new name.

I would personally like to acknowledge all the AA Members who since 1975 started this Service Office for the Illawarra and South Coast regions. They were pioneers in starting local service offices — there had only been a State Office when AA started in Australia (NSW) in 1945. We created a short history here for the South Coast Alcoholics Anonymous Service Council as we were known until 2nd July 2025.

<https://irp.cdn-website.com/bccbbb3b/files/uploaded/AAAA-Illawarra-Piece.pdf>

The Executive Committee in its last 3-year term, worked diligently through both

1. The physical office — sorting through old files, documents and equipment and cleaning the space for it to be a warm and friendly space for members and the general public to visit.

2. The record keeping — especially working to set aside monies for the day that rent changes etc. could impact the service to the point that it may have needed to close.

In the move, we were able to send 20 boxes of archived materials to the National Office for safe keeping and digitisation and will continue this practice going forward so our local AA history is not lost.

Our groups and the ISCCSOInc Management are indeed very fortunate to be able to transition into our new legal structure with such a healthy financial reserve.

Some CSOs have closed — Central Coast NSW, Gold Coast QLD, Blue Mountains — and many have not started because of the cost of rental space and the fact that many CSO functions such as answering help calls and selling literature are now able to be operated digitally. The latter means that instead of CSOs been established Districts under the General Service Arm of AA have been set up to perform these local service functions.

The Illawarra & South Coast Central Service Office Inc. has worked to ensure that we can

1. Continue to have a physical presence in the Illawarra by putting aside a prudent reserve of one year's operation (\$15,000) which represents our expenses in running our new office in Coniston, and
2. Having a Constitution structured such that only minimal wording changes ,such as a new name, would need to be made if at some point our groups decide to close our office, or if the local groups do not provide sufficient contributions to maintain the office.

That said, this association Committee is committed to the AA principle of both "Pass it Forward" — AA is not about accumulating profit/ making money —"our primarily purpose" of carrying AA's message of recovery to the still suffering alcoholic, both in and especially out of our rooms using monies excess to our prudent reserve for this.

So on behalf of all the fellowship, a "Big Thanks" to that last Executive Rusty A, Tony H, Anne S, Dave H, Gary W and Marianne H for their foresight and huge contribution to our Illawarra and South Coast community.

Yours in service

Ro G
Public Officer 2026