



CANDIDATE STATEMENT

Elizabeth (Liz) Little

Standing for:

**National President, AASW Board
Ordinary Director, AASW Board**

Phone: 0409 192 084

Email: liz.little@bigpond.com

It is time for significant changes to how AASW operates, relates to, and supports AASW Members. The AASW Board is elected to represent its Members interests, and to direct and oversight the effective management of the policies, resources, and assets of the Company.

I refer Members to Linda Ford's resignation email of November 2024... Linda is the most recent AASW President elected by the Membership (vs. appointed by the Board) and the first Aboriginal person in Australia elected to such a position. Her resignation expresses her sadness at being unable to transform the Association to the collaborative and inclusive organisation she envisaged when she took office and is a damning indictment of the current dysfunction of the Board.

If I am elected as President, I will work with the newly elected Board to correct the drift to Corporate Executive dominance over the Board and to redirect its resources to generate greater member participation and relevance. I will promote broad based consultation with Members and stakeholders about key issues and increase the transparency and accountability of both Board and Executive management/operations.

I have the knowledge, experience, skills, and resilience to lead this change as the result of a long and diverse career spent as a Senior Executive in Government; a CEO in the non-government/not-for profit sector; as a Commissioner exercising independent statutory authority; as a senior social work academic; and, as a previous small business Owner/ Company Director.

I have diverse experience on Boards and Committees including as the Chair of the National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence; member of the Tasmanian Superannuation Accumulation Fund Board; inaugural member of the Female Factory Board that managed its declaration as a World Heritage Site; member of the University of Tasmania Human Research Ethics Committee; and, Peer Reviewer for the Australian National Research Organization for Women's Safety... among others.

I been actively contributing to AASW for over a decade as a member of the National Accreditation Panel since 2015; as the President of the Tasmanian Branch Management Committee (BMC) since 2023 (previously as a Member); and, as a national Case Reviewer in relation to alleged breaches of the *AASW Code of Ethics* from 2021-23.

In 2023 I was entered into the Tasmanian Honour Roll of Women for 'service to community,

advocacy and inclusion, government, public services; human rights; justice; and the prevention of family violence'. My citation states that I advanced "the rights of Tasmanian women and children, and assisted the rural community navigate drought, the impacts of bushfires and floods, and the drop in dairy prices."

I am proud to be part of a profession that has as its core the value of 'betterment of the human condition'. Social Work has provided me with a Code of Ethics, knowledge base, skill set, and practice framework that has focused my energy, resourced my intellect, and given me the courage, confidence and resilience to publicly stand up for social justice and pursue social change. The very nature of social work with its capacity to engage individuals, families, communities, organisations, and governments means that it is like no other.

Now is a good time for a 'big picture' rethink about where our profession is going and how AASW, as a member funded organisation, can best support us into the future.

If elected, I will work to the best of my ability to:

- Refocus the culture and operations of both the Board and Corporate arms of AASW to be member-centred and provide improved member engagement/responsiveness and increased organisational transparency and accountability;
- Provide increased, realistic capitation-based funding to State/Territory Branch Committees to support social workers on the ground and provide local policy, advocacy, and information services;
- Review the current national Social Work Registration (AHPRA) strategy and consider as alternatives the merit of Title Recognition or following SA's lead in achieving State/Territory-based Registration;
- Encourage strategic industry and professional partnerships to advocate for greater industrial democracy, improved work/life balance, and the creation of healthier and safer workplaces for social workers across Australia;
- Support social work educators to build their capacity to produce graduates who are resilient, job-ready, competent, and potential strategic leaders in complex, fast changing environments and to ensure the ongoing quality of Australian social work education;
- Review the operation of the AASW website in order to make it more user friendly, accessible, and practice relevant;
- Promote social work as a profession.

VOTE FOR CHANGE!