

s47E(c), s47F

From: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@milesmorgan.com.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 12 July 2023 8:44 AM
To: HERALD, Russell
Subject: Fwd: Message from "RNP0026737FE4E7"
Attachments: 20230712081602912.pdf

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Hi Rusty,

Please see attached. It's an alarmingly false read and the lies are particularly bad when you consider the governance that was in place and the fact the network was educated about itself by FF.

I am not sure how Les manages to hold a role and get funded with this sort of BS.

Cheers
 LG

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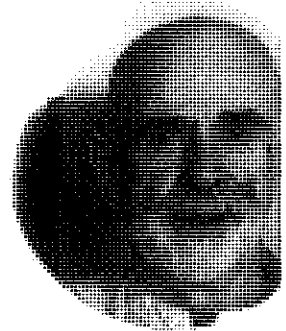
From: s47F@bigpond.com s47F@bigpond.com
Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 8:16:03 AM
To: Lakshman Gunaratnam s47F@milesmorgan.com.au>
Subject: Message from "RNP0026737FE4E7"
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Scan Date: 07.12.2023 08:16:02 (+1000)
 Queries to: s47F@bigpond.com

A message from our CEO...

Les MacDonald

CEO, Meals on Wheels NSW



It is I think important that I address the issues that have diverted so much of the Association's and the network's time and resources over recent months into fruitless, unnecessary and damaging interpersonal and inter-organisational conflict. In order to understand that, it is necessary to have some context to those events. The Federal Department of Health and Ageing decided nearly two years ago now, to appoint an external consultant to provide assistance to MOW services around Australia to develop processes, systems and tools to enable those services to cope with the emergence of the new funding and classification system that the then government were proposing to introduce into the Care at Home space for older Australians by end June 2023. The Department appears to have decided upon that course of action without having a relatively mature understanding of the complexity of the MOW system throughout Australia and of the different levels of development and structure that then existed between different states.

That created a major problem in that when the consultants who were appointed to undertake that task turned their minds to the task, they found to their surprise that what had been told to them about that complexity and differences in structure had been correct. That raised the question of how the consultant was to deliver on what they had undertaken to do across Australia in their contract with the Department. It was apparently decided that the body chosen to take the blame for that lack of understanding by the Consultant and the Department was The Australian Meals on Wheels Association (AMOWA). Thus began a process which led to confusing both the Department and AMOWA as to the alleged actions and decisions of each other. As a result of that confusion, whether deliberately created or due to failure of processes, the Department were led to believe that AMOWA was a problem for Future Fit and should be excluded from participation. It appears apparent from statements attributed to the Departmental Officer concerned that he believed what he was being told. The result appears to have been the exclusion of AMOWA from the Future Fit process at a very early stage.

In order to cope with the reality that the consultant belatedly discovered they began to drastically modify the coverage of the project by in effect reducing it to principally two states, Queensland and New South Wales, and changing the language to suggest that those two states were the only parts of the network that were "active" and functional. The creation of that impression appeared to be necessary to deal with the fact that the original contract with the consultant was meant to deal with the entire MOW system throughout Australia.

In order to show delivery on the contract requirements it became clear that it was necessary to achieve the participation of virtually all the services in those two states for the project to have any credibility within government. The two state bodies were convinced to try to assure that level of total participation, despite expressions of concern about the ability to achieve that level of participation. Both bodies responded actively and professionally and put major resources into achieving the two stocktakes, without much yet in the way of return to the services for that participation. That effort to obtain sign-on

A message from our CEO cont'd...

was complicated by the inability to obtain a clear and compelling indication of what services would achieve from the process. That lack of clarity has continued pretty much up to the present, compounded by a culture of secrecy worthy of ASIO. That failure in transparency has led to some distrust within the network in NSW as to what exactly it is that they will get from what is a very time consuming and costly expenditure of public funds.

To further complicate the issue, a very small number of member services within the network whose service model ideas do not correspond with those of a clear majority of the network, appear to have seen Future Fit as a way to put their system design ideas into practice throughout the network. Those member services have created, almost certainly unwittingly, a level of potential conflict and dissension within the network that, if successful, could be extremely damaging to the reputation and service model that services have worked so hard for decades to develop and sustain. The ideas of this small group, in so far as it is possible to summarise a broad collection of not necessarily related ideas, appear to focus around the idea that our network can best survive by changing our service model to match the service model of commercial organisations in the meal supply to the home space. That means, to a greater or lesser extent, changing from our very successful relational model of service delivery to a far more transactional model. There are a number of other ideas within that group including centralising purchasing functions, eliminating production kitchens and purchasing all supplies from commercial meal suppliers, etc. As you will all know we have canvassed the network on a number of occasions about such ideas and you have convincingly demonstrated that you simply do not agree with adopting those. We will of course continue to seek your views as circumstances change.

Unfortunately whether deliberate or due to incapacity, the combined efforts of this rather disparate group appears to be undermining the established roles of both MOWNSW and the bulk of the services. The cumulative effect of their actions in collaboration with the consultant, appears to have led to the unfortunate, costly and diversionary situation which we recently faced on the board of the Association. That has not only absorbed enormous amounts of board and staff time, but has cost a very substantial amount of money that would otherwise have been spent in supporting the network. We are working hard to put these aggravations behind us and continue the high level of services that we know that you appreciate and expect. We have convened a Webinar that all members have been invited to attend that will give an opportunity for members to understand the complexities of the situation that has arisen and to ask whatever questions they feel need answering.

I am sure that you all appreciate that division in such networks as ours only renders us weak and vulnerable and that is the last thing we need during a time when we are lobbying flat out to support all of you and to ensure you have a long and healthy future.

From: [Lakshman Gunaratnam](#)
To: [HERALD, Russell](#)
Subject: FW: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Wednesday, 12 July 2023 1:01:11 PM
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)
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Hi Rusty – I've just been sent this.

It seems to give Ballarat more of a touch up. But to the point of Ruston – can't go to other local MOW providers when they don't exist.

But how can Les write the below when this has gone out and he would be aware.

Thanks

LG

Lakshman Gunaratnam

CEO

s47F

s47F @milesmorgan.com.au



From: Les Macdonald <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 12:03 PM

To: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au; MOW NSW Board

s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Russell,

I have withheld speaking to the network about much of the devious behaviour that has been displayed in recent times until it was absolutely necessary to do so as many services have been asking us What the hell is going on with Future Fit. AS you are well aware we have been trying to arrange meetings of our board with Lakshman and you in more recent times, without evident success. It was necessary to finally give them some information to explain what has been happening that they, and we, have not been informed about by you or by MMA.

What we know is that much disinformation has been provided to the network about the Association. Let me be clear AGAIN. We have spent vast amounts of staff time and energy in

promoting Future Fit to the network. That effort has not been rewarded by MMA with any acknowledgement at all. Indeed, we have been blackguarded to the network as getting in the road and making life difficult for MMA. We were also excluded from the Town Hall event, with you saying it was some services that did not want us present, and with them saying it was you that did not want us present. It is not hard to understand how suspicions arise when such directly conflicting narratives are spread.

You will note that in our recent webinar we provided Future Fit with the opportunity to make a video presentation of progress. Which they did. So it is difficult to argue that it is us failing to co-operate. After all the same courtesy was not extended to us at the Town Hall meeting. Then there is the case that services were informed at the Parliamentary Friends of Meals on Wheels event that our President had asked his Cousin by marriage to frustrate the event, which has been found by a subsequent detailed independent and expensive investigation to have no substance and to have been vexatious in nature.

The New South Wales board are a fine group of people who are committed to serving the needs of services but have been largely excluded from communications about Future Fit. It is hardly surprising that in the absence of any direct communication other narratives develop in the network to explain what otherwise cannot be explained.

We are unaware of any "shameful" actions taken by our Victorian colleagues. They have as far as we are concerned always acted with integrity and openness, a characteristic not shared by MMA in their dealings in NSW.

My concern about NSW providing services in Victoria has nothing to do with s47F. They relate to my experience over many years in this sector that states and local communities have a high degree of ownership of vital community based services and are inclined to react negatively to another state coming in to their space. There has already been some of that reaction in social media and I think that has potential to damage our brand in Victoria. Incidentally I don't doubt that the service that s47F can provide is of a good quality. That is not the point. No opportunity in the form of a tender was given to Victorian organisations to take on these services. I guess we will see how community reaction develops in coming months and years. Incidentally I do not despise any member services of ours in NSW or anywhere else for that matter. I simply point out that the group that I am referring to have views about the way our services should be organised that do not correspond with the views of the vast majority, but who feel that their views need to be required to be adopted by the rest of the network and that we should participate in that process. We share the view of the majority that it is a matter for them as to the way in which to organise themselves.

Having said all that I am still keen for you and Lakshman to come to a board meeting and to try to correct any "misinterpretations" or misunderstandings that currently exist in our board and in our network.

Regards,

Les

Les MacDonald
CEO

Meals on Wheels NSW
Suite 0.2, 15 Bourke Rd
MASCOT NSW 2020

Office Hours: 7.30am – 4.00pm

Phone s47F **Fax** s47F



Email: s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au

Website: www.nswmealsonwheels.org.au

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From: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 11:21 AM

To: Les Macdonald <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board <s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

You are simply reflecting a narrative that serves certain purposes, and not what has actually happened and why

The information is useful for the narrative of which you seek to construct, but leads others to draw inferences that are patently incorrect. That is your prerogative. However, were you actually invested in discussing and resolving these issues you wouldn't send information like this out before said discussions – it is not an act of good faith when the goal is to come to a resolution of these concerns. It leads me to believe the NSW MOW board is not genuine on these issues.

Victoria is a classic case of certain individuals caring more about power and influence than the needs of older Australians. The actions taken by some of those individuals are exceedingly petty and shameful. Your reference to Victoria below leads me to believe you disagree with the notion of maintaining longstanding social connections to some of our most vulnerable because one or two individuals who are not party to commercial negotiations didn't get the ability to say what a good job they did to save the day. It is hokum to suggest this is about governance and not more about personalities.

I also believe you object that s47F was the one awarded the contract because he is one of these "small number of services" you seem to despise. Perhaps you might better reflect on the why and not the who. s47F and LG have done a wonderful job in Whitehorse, and to detract from that is nothing but childish behaviour from those involved.

I assume that the majority of NSW MOW continue to care about the needs of clients and members, rather than holding grudges and point scoring.

Rusty

From: Les Macdonald <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 12 July 2023 10:43 AM

To: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board <s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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Hi Russell,

I think the opportunity for you and Lakshman to talk to the full board will give both of you the chance to convince them that what I am saying does not reflect "reality" as you see it. I might also say that any understandings that I may have had have been garnered through direct communications with Lakshman, you, s47F and others in the small group around MMA and from reports coming in to me from members and from members of our board and AMOWA. I am simply reflecting what has happened to not just us but AMOWA and Victoria as well, as a result of the actions of the consultant and that small number of services who have been fostering a process of division and dissension that frankly I have not experienced before in twenty years with Meals on Wheels. It may well be that in many instances we have been and are being misled and I am open to you correcting what has been said to us and about us by the Consultant and its small number of acolytes within our membership, but the reality is that those assertions and actions have been destructive and divisive as has been demonstrated recently by outrageous, unwarranted and untrue allegations made about members of our board as a means of causing division and to undertake an attempted coup against members of that board, as was done with the board of AMOWA. Indeed I have recently been told that one of the acolytes has expressed puzzlement and frustration at the re-structuring of the AMOWA board, as that person felt they had been successful at delivering the coup de grace to it apparently. That reflects the general approach of destroying structures and processes that have served us well for decades, without any idea of what to replace them with and without any justification. We are in the process of putting together a document that sets out all of facts behind what I have said to our network on these unfortunate matters and that could be discussed with you and Lakshman at a meeting of the board. As I have said on far too many occasions we at the Association remain committed to getting whatever does finally emerge from Future Fit for our members, but we will not allow the process by which that is being progressed to destroy what we have spent those twenty years in building, and that is an integrated and co-operative network that uses its collective strengths to well serve the communities of NSW. I look forward to you and Lakshman coming to a board meeting where all these matters can be discussed openly and transparently and some satisfactory resolution achieved.

Regards,

Les

Les MacDonald

CEO

Meals on Wheels NSW

Suite 0.2, 15 Bourke Rd

MASCOT NSW 2020

Office Hours: 7.30am – 4.00pm

Phone s47F Fax s47F



Email: s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au

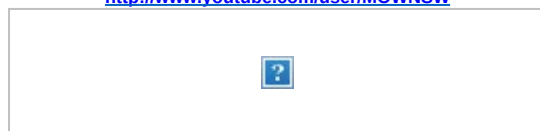
Website: www.nswmealsonwheels.org.au

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From: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 9:32 AM

To: Les Macdonald <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board

s47G(1)(a) <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Subject: NSWMOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Les,

If this is your genuine understanding of the world then this raises a number of interesting questions for me – simply as a decent chunk of this does not accurately reflect history. I can only choose to believe that you have misinterpreted or have been misled in a number of areas. The alternative would only raise more concerns.

Russell Herald

Assistant Secretary

Home Support Operations Branch

Home and Residential Division | Ageing and Aged Care Group

Department of Health and Aged Care

(W) 02 6289 **s47F** (M) **s47F**

Executive Assistant: **s47E(c)**, **s47F**

s47E(c), **s47F** <s47F@health.gov.au> (W) 02 6289 **s47F**

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s47G(1)(a)

Meals on Wheels Victoria questions awarding contracts to providers from other states

Meals on Wheels Victoria has revealed it was shocked to learn of a change in contracts to provide meals to aged care residents. See why and what it means.

00:41

Meals on Wheels program at...

Federal cuts to home supports for the aged have hit Victoria, sparking fears the vital Meals on Wheels program is at risk

National

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EXCLUSIVE: Meals on Wheels Victoria has accused the Government of lacking transparency after it awarded two interstate providers a lucrative \$2.2m to run pilot services in the state, without consulting them.

A Queensland and a NSW provider were awarded one year contracts to provide meals to the elderly in Whitehorse and Ballarat from July 1, without going through a tender process.

Both areas were in danger of losing services after the local councils announced they would end funding on June 30.

Meals on Wheels Victoria state manager Alina Hinton-Tooley said while they were pleased to see the elderly would continue to get meals delivered, the organisation had been "blindsided" by the move.

"It's really odd that a federal minister would set up a pilot program in our state without even speaking to the Meals on Wheels state peak body," Ms Hinton-Tooley said.

s47G(1)(a)



Shadow Minister Anne Ruston has asked why the government did not consult or engage local Meals on Wheels services. Picture: Martin Ollman

“Why were local providers not considered?”

“We feel there’s a lack of transparency.

“Why were we not involved with what was being planned in our own state?”

Ms Hinton-Tooley claimed an email sent to Aged Care Minister Anika Wells in March demanding an explanation had gone unanswered, although her office said they could not locate the email.

She also had questions around why the interstate providers were getting far more funding per meal than local providers.

“The biggest issue apart from transparency is the disparity,” Ms Hinton-Tooley said.

s47G(1)(a)

"If you do the maths, funding for the pilot works out at about \$13 a meal, which is more funding than any of the other providers are getting in Victoria, which is about \$8.25."

Shadow Minister Anne Ruston asked questions about the pilots at the last Senate Estimates.

"The Minister must explain why Meals on Wheels Victoria was not given the opportunity to apply for this pilot program despite being the local provider, and why she instead chose to fly in a provider from her own state of Queensland to deliver a service for Victorians," Ms Ruston said.

"The direct tender process raises some serious concerns about the fairness and transparency involved in this selection."



Aged Care Minister Anika Wells. Picture: NCA NewsWire/Martin Ollman

The Department of Health and Aged Care responded to Ms Ruston's questions on notice saying that the higher funding per meal for the pilots was "reflective of higher than average costs involved with establishing new infrastructure".

s47G(1)(a)

It also said that peak bodies are not usually consulted and meals providers with the necessary capacity and capability were reviewed and selected, as part of the selection process.

Meals on Wheels Victoria published a report in February warning that its services were in danger of disappearing in parts of the state due in part to the exit of the local government from the sector and a lack of clarity about funding.

It found that in some areas Meals on Wheels services were being replaced by fortnightly frozen meal deliveries, meaning less contact between the volunteers and the elderly, an important part of the service.

A spokesman for the Department of Health and Aged Care said "through this process, the department has sought to ensure ongoing social connection for older Australians, with the vast majority of existing volunteers continuing and allowing longstanding relationships to be maintained".

The spokesman said since the transition on July 1, the department has only received positive feedback.

Originally published as [Meals on Wheels Victoria questions awarding contracts to providers from other states](#)

From: [Lakshman Gunaratnam](#)
To: [HERALD, Russell](#)
Subject: FW: NSWMOw note [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Wednesday, 12 July 2023 1:31:37 PM
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Dear MOW NSW Board,

MMA and has presented to and spoken with yourselves, your services etc. And your CEO has been part of the raft of governance mechanisms to try and ensure you help your services and their communities.

Based on the tone of these recent emails, I can confirm we are not here to justify our role for something your national body sought and something your services . I would encourage you to communicate amongst yourself and actually engage with the services you represent.

In the words of Barrack Obama – we are here to get things done. If that's still not obvious to your CEO since this started in 2021, then I don't think we can fix your internal failures.

Regards

Lakshman

Lakshman Gunaratnam

CEO

s47F

s47F @milesmorgan.com.au



From: Les Macdonald <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 12:52 PM

To: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board

<s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Subject: RE: NSWMOw note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Only one way to find out Russell. Both of you come to the meeting. My view is that the board was looking for a finalisation of all this well before you. Let's have a meeting to clear the air, get some rules about how we will interact in future and move on!!

Les

Les MacDonald

CEO

Meals on Wheels NSW

Suite 0.2, 15 Bourke Rd

MASCOT NSW 2020

Office Hours: 7.30am – 4.00pm

Phone (s47F) Fax (s47F)



Email: (s47F)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au

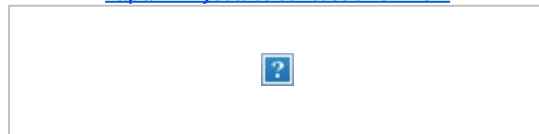
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From: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 1:08 PM

To: Les Macdonald <(s47F)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam <(s47F)@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board <(s47G(1)(a))@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

To put it simply, treating misinformation with misinformation is not useful.

I have a strong question mark over whether there is actually any intent to come to a joint resolution.

I am well and truly over this. Everyone needs to shut up, get over the past and rebase so that we can move on. I can't say it more clearly – everything being said, every bit of naval gazing, is doing absolutely nothing but detract.

Rusty

From: Les Macdonald <(s47F)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 12 July 2023 12:33 PM

To: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam <(s47F)@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board <(s47G(1)(a))@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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happening that they, and we, have not been informed about by you or by MMA.

What we know is that much disinformation has been provided to the network about the Association. Let me be clear AGAIN. We have spent vast amounts of staff time and energy in promoting Future Fit to the network. That effort has not been rewarded by MMA with any acknowledgement at all. Indeed, we have been blackguarded to the network as getting in the road and making life difficult for MMA. We were also excluded from the Town Hall event, with you saying it was some services that did not want us present, and with them saying it was you that did not want us present. It is not hard to understand how suspicions arise when such directly conflicting narratives are spread.

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The New South Wales board are a fine group of people who are committed to serving the needs of services but have been largely excluded from communications about Future Fit. It is hardly surprising that in the absence of any direct communication other narratives develop in the network to explain what otherwise cannot be explained.

We are unaware of any "shameful" actions taken by our Victorian colleagues. They have as far as we are concerned always acted with integrity and openness, a characteristic not shared by MMA in their dealings in NSW.

My concern about NSW providing services in Victoria has nothing to do with s47F. They relate to my experience over many years in this sector that states and local communities have a high degree of ownership of vital community based services and are inclined to react negatively to another state coming in to their space. There has already been some of that reaction in social media and I think that has potential to damage our brand in Victoria. Incidentally I don't doubt that the service that s47F can provide is of a good quality. That is not the point. No opportunity in the form of a tender was given to Victorian organisations to take on these services. I guess we will see how community reaction develops in coming months and years. Incidentally I do not despise any member services of ours in NSW or anywhere else for that matter. I simply point out that the group that I am referring to have views about the way our services should be organised that do not correspond with the views of the vast majority, but who feel that their views need to be required to be adopted by the rest of the network and that we should participate in that process. We share the view of the majority that it is a matter for them as to the way in which to organise themselves.

Having said all that I am still keen for you and Lakshman to come to a board meeting and to try to correct any "misinterpretations" or misunderstandings that currently exist in our board and in our network.

Regards,

Les

Les MacDonald

CEO

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MASCOT NSW 2020

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Phone (s47F) Fax s47F



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 of the Eora Nation, whose sovereignty was never ceded*

From: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 11:21 AM

To: Les Macdonald <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>; MOW NSW Board
 <[s47G\(1\)\(a\)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

You are simply reflecting a narrative that serves certain purposes, and not what has actually happened and why

The information is useful for the narrative of which you seek to construct, but leads others to draw inferences that are patently incorrect. That is your prerogative. However, were you actually invested in discussing and resolving these issues you wouldn't send information like this out before said discussions – it is not an act of good faith when the goal is to come to a resolution of these concerns. It leads me to believe the NSW MOW board is not genuine on these issues. Victoria is a classic case of certain individuals caring more about power and influence than the needs of older Australians. The actions taken by some of those individuals are exceedingly petty and shameful. Your reference to Victoria below leads me to believe you disagree with the notion of maintaining longstanding social connections to some of our most vulnerable because one or two individuals who are not party to commercial negotiations didn't get the ability to say what a good job they did to save the day. It is hokum to suggest this is about governance and not more about personalities.

I also believe you object that [s47F](mailto:s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au) was the one awarded the contract because he is one of these "small number of services" you seem to despise. Perhaps you might better reflect on the why and not the who. [s47F](mailto:s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au) and LG have done a wonderful job in Whitehorse, and to detract from that is nothing but childish behaviour from those involved.

I assume that the majority of NSW MOW continue to care about the needs of clients and members, rather than holding grudges and point scoring.

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Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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Hi Russell,

I think the opportunity for you and Lakshman to talk to the full board will give both of you the chance to convince them that what I am saying does not reflect "reality" as you see it. I might also say that any understandings that I may have had have been garnered through direct communications with Lakshman, you, s47F and others in the small group around MMA and from reports coming in to me from members and from members of our board and AMOWA. I am simply reflecting what has happened to not just us but AMOWA and Victoria as well, as a result of the actions of the consultant and that small number of services who have been fostering a process of division and dissension that frankly I have not experienced before in twenty years with Meals on Wheels. It may well be that in many instances we have been and are being misled and I am open to you correcting what has been said to us and about us by the Consultant and its small number of acolytes within our membership, but the reality is that those assertions and actions have been destructive and divisive as has been demonstrated recently by outrageous, unwarranted and untrue allegations made about members of our board as a means of causing division and to undertake an attempted coup against members of that board, as was done with the board of AMOWA. Indeed I have recently been told that one of the acolytes has expressed puzzlement and frustration at the re-structuring of the AMOWA board, as that person felt they had been successful at delivering the coup de grace to it apparently. That reflects the general approach of destroying structures and processes that have served us well for decades, without any idea of what to replace them with and without any justification.

We are in the process of putting together a document that sets out all of facts behind what I have said to our network on these unfortunate matters and that could be discussed with you and Lakshman at a meeting of the board. As I have said on far too many occasions we at the Association remain committed to getting whatever does finally emerge from Future Fit for our members, but we will not allow the process by which that is being progressed to destroy what we have spent those twenty years in building, and that is an integrated and co-operative network that uses its collective strengths to well serve the communities of NSW. I look forward to you and Lakshman coming to a board meeting where all these matters can be discussed openly and transparently and some satisfactory resolution achieved.

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Les MacDonald
CEO

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From: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 9:32 AM

To: Les Macdonald <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board <[s47G\(1\)\(a\)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)>

Subject: NSWMOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Les,

If this is your genuine understanding of the world then this raises a number of interesting questions for me – simply as a decent chunk of this does not accurately reflect history. I can only choose to believe that you have misinterpreted or have been misled in a number of areas. The alternative would only raise more concerns.

Russell Herald

Assistant Secretary

Home Support Operations Branch

Home and Residential Division | Ageing and Aged Care Group

Department of Health and Aged Care

(W) 02 6289 s47F (M) s47F

Executive Assistant: s47E(c), s47F

s47E(c), s47F [@health.gov.au](mailto:s47F@health.gov.au) (W) 02 6289 s47F

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From: [Lakshman Gunaratnam](#)
To: [HERALD, Russell](#)
Date: Wednesday, 12 July 2023 2:25:49 PM

REMINDER: Think before you click! This email originated from outside our organisation. Only click links or open attachments if you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear MOW NSW Board,

Miles Morgan Australia has presented to and spoken with yourselves, your services, gone out to service etc since the transformation program commenced in 2021. Furthermore, your CEO has been part of the raft of governance mechanisms to try and ensure you help your services and the communities they represent. There has been a fully document governance process and records from every meeting. There are members of this group that have been on said governance mechanisms. There are also members of this group that we continue to work with. Based on the tone of these recent emails, I can confirm we are not here to justify our role for something your national body sought and something your services continue to derive benefit. I would strongly encourage you to communicate amongst yourselves and with those services you purport to represent.

If your CEO is unable to talk to services, read the material provided at countless meetings, look at the updates through a website he helped create, and if I have to waste my time explaining the blindingly obvious to what is happening across aged care – and the opportunity that exists for Meals on Wheels **front line services** – then I think your State Association has bigger issues of relevance at play. Sadly, the words of your CEO suggest a deride focus on relevance than actually making sure vulnerable Australians live in dignity.

I attached for your collective reference the article where it appears MOW saw it appropriate to ask the opposition to question the motives of services coming in to help fix a problem that your CEO and President have failed to address – for years. It's a real shame that, as these emails suggest, self interest is placed before people lives. Absolutely shameful.

In the words of Barrack Obama – we are here to get things done. If that's still not obvious to your CEO since this started in 2021, then I don't think we can fix your internal failures.

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From: [Lakshman Gunaratnam](#)
To: [MOW NSW Board](#)
Cc: [Les Macdonald](#); [HERALD, Russell](#)
Subject: RE: NSWMOw note [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Wednesday, 12 July 2023 4:36:57 PM
Attachments: [image007.png](#)
[image009.jpg](#)
[image013.jpg](#)
[image016.jpg](#)
[image019.jpg](#)
[image020.jpg](#)
[image022.jpg](#)
[image028.png](#)
[image029.jpg](#)
[image031.png](#)
[image001.jpg](#)
[image002.jpg](#)
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[image008.jpg](#)
[image010.jpg](#)
[image025.png](#)
[image026.png](#)

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Dear MOW NSW Board,

Miles Morgan Australia has presented to and spoken with yourselves on several occasions, NSW services (online and F2F) since this transformation program commenced. Furthermore, your CEO has been part of the raft of governance mechanisms to try and ensure you help NSW services and the communities they represent. I have also made multiple trips to Sydney to meet with your CEO. There are fully documented governance processes and associated records. There are members of this group that have been on said governance mechanisms. And there are also members of this group that we continue to work with.

Based on the tone of the recent emails, I can confirm we are not here to justify our role for something your national body actively sought (but then could not deliver) and something your services continue to derive benefit. I assume, given the frequency of the emails below (and others like it) your CEO speaks on behalf of the whole Board? And on that basis the Board supports all the communications to-date? If this is not the case, I would encourage you to engage amongst yourselves and with those services you seek to represent.

If your CEO is unable to talk to services about the value they have derived through forums of collaboration and respect, read the material provided at countless Future Fit governance meetings that he has endorsed as “the gold that we have been waiting for that is bound to get the interest of the network”, look at the updates through a website he helped create, and if I need to continue to explain the blindingly obvious to what is happening across aged care – and the opportunity that exists for Meals on Wheels front line services – then I think your State Association has bigger issues of relevance at play. Sadly, the words of your CEO suggest a fixation on relevance rather than actually making sure vulnerable Australians live in dignity.

I would highlight for your collective reference a recent article in **The (Adelaide) Advertiser**, where it appears AMOWA saw it appropriate to ask the Federal opposition to question the motives of services coming in to help fix a problem that your CEO and President have failed to address – for years in their capacity as members of AMOWA. Instead of thanking your colleagues

in the network (s47F and s47F) who stood up and acted, this article attacks them. And from reading this article those responsible have sought to humiliate not just them, but seems to question their professional integrity. Perhaps those behind the article could have spent 5 minutes to learn about how governments have applauded the support of Meals on Wheels front line services for collaborating across borders to support communities in Victoria. I would hope the majority of Board members would prefer to share in the success of their colleagues (near and far in the network) rather than treat them in the manner set out through in this article. It's a real shame that, as the emails below suggest, self-interest is placed before people lives. A real shame.

In the words of Barrack Obama – we are here to get things done. If that's still not obvious to your CEO since the inception of this program started in 2021, then I don't think we can fix your internal failures.

Regards

Lakshman

Lakshman Gunaratnam

CEO

s47F

s47F @milesmorgan.com.au



From: Les Macdonald <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 12:52 PM

To: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board s47G(1)(a) @nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Only one way to find out Russell. Both of you come to the meeting. My view is that the board was looking for a finalisation of all this well before you. Let's have a meeting to clear the air, get some rules about how we will interact in future and move on!!

Les

Les MacDonald

CEO

Meals on Wheels NSW

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MASCOT NSW 2020

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From: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 1:08 PM

To: Les Macdonald <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board <[s47G\(1\)\(a\)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

To put it simply, treating misinformation with misinformation is not useful.

I have a strong question mark over whether there is actually any intent to come to a joint resolution.

I am well and truly over this. Everyone needs to shut up, get over the past and rebase so that we can move on. I cant say it more clearly – everything being said, every bit of naval gazing, is doing absolutely nothing but detract.

Rusty

From: Les Macdonald <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 12 July 2023 12:33 PM

To: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board <[s47G\(1\)\(a\)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Russell,

I have withheld speaking to the network about much of the devious behaviour that has been displayed in recent times until it was absolutely necessary to do so as many services have been asking us What the hell is going on with Future Fit. AS you are well aware we have been trying to arrange meetings of our board with Lakshman and you in more recent times, without evident success. It was necessary to finally give them some information to explain what has been happening that they, and we, have not been informed about by you or by MMA.

What we know is that much misinformation has been provided to the network about the Association. Let me be clear AGAIN. We have spent vast amounts of staff time and energy in promoting Future Fit to the network. That effort has not been rewarded by MMA with any acknowledgement at all. Indeed, we have been blackguarded to the network as getting in the road and making life difficult for MMA. We were also excluded from the Town Hall event, with you saying it was some services that did not want us present, and with them saying it was you that did not want us present. It is not hard to understand how suspicions arise when such directly conflicting narratives are spread.

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Having said all that I am still keen for you and Lakshman to come to a board meeting and to try to correct any “misinterpretations” or misunderstandings that currently exist in our board and in our network.

Regards,

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Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board
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Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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Sent: Wednesday, 12 July 2023 10:43 AM

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Regards,

Les

Les MacDonald

CEO

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From: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 9:32 AM

To: Les Macdonald <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>; MOW NSW Board <s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Subject: NSWMOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Les,

If this is your genuine understanding of the world then this raises a number of interesting questions for me – simply as a decent chunk of this does not accurately reflect history.

I can only choose to believe that you have misinterpreted or have been misled in a number of

areas. The alternative would only raise more concerns.

Russell Herald

Assistant Secretary

Home Support Operations Branch

Home and Residential Division | Ageing and Aged Care Group

Department of Health and Aged Care

(W) 02 6289 s47F (M) s47F

Executive Assistant: s47E(c), s47F

s47E(c), s47F [@health.gov.au](mailto:s47E(c), s47F@health.gov.au) (W) 02 6289 s47F

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From: [Lakshman Gunaratnam](#)
To: [HERALD, Russell](#)
Subject: FW: NSWMOV note [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Thursday, 13 July 2023 7:47:50 AM
Attachments: [image005.jpg](#)
[image006.jpg](#)
[image007.jpg](#)
[image008.jpg](#)
[image009.jpg](#)
[image011.jpg](#)
[image013.png](#)
[image014.jpg](#)
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[image031.png](#)
[image010.jpg](#)
[image012.jpg](#)
[image015.png](#)
[image018.jpg](#)
[image019.jpg](#)
[image020.png](#)

Morning Rusty – let me know if you would prefer to respond.

My proposed email is drafted below:

MMA is the FF Project Sponsor and DOHAC the Project Owner, as you know from the governance arrangements put in place.

MMA will not be entering into a CoC with a body that is not the recipient of FF outputs and service delivery improvement. MMA has clear arrangements in place with services. MMA welcomes a CoC between NSW services and the NSW Board.

Per my note below, MMA is committed to a fully transparent, open, joint letter.

Lakshman Gunaratnam

CEO

s47F

s47F @milesmorgan.com.au



From: Les Macdonald <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Sent: Thursday, July 13, 2023 7:06 AM

To: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@milesmorgan.com.au>; HERALD, Russell
 <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>; MOW NSW Board
 <s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Subject: RE: NSWMOV note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

I think if every member of the board is required to sign such a MoU that would require every member of the controlling body of Future Fit to also sign. I think a more sensible arrangement would be a Code of Conduct which all could sign and then an MoU which sets out the respective roles of each body, which the Board could endorse as could the governing body of Future Fit.

Les

Les MacDonald
 CEO

Meals on Wheels NSW

Suite 0.2, 15 Bourke Rd

MASCOT NSW 2020

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Website: www.nswmealsonwheels.org.au

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From: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F @milesmorgan.com.au>

Sent: Thursday, July 13, 2023 7:08 AM

To: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>; MOW NSW Board <s47G(1)(a) @nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Cc: Les Macdonald <s47F @nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

MMA endorses a fully transparent, open, joint letter that is signed by every member of the NSW Board. And in doing so an actual solutions focus to Future Fit and the commitment made by two federal governments and the funding body to ensure the network's survival.

Lakshman Gunaratnam

CEO

s47F

s47F @milesmorgan.com.au



From: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 6:25 PM

To: Les Macdonald <s47F @nswmealsonwheels.org.au>; Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F @milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board <s47G(1)(a) @nswmealsonwheels.org.au>; Tennille Valensisi <s47F @mowgriffith.org.au>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

No, that doesn't work for me

I'm not going to invest in a process of drafting something if I don't have agreement to a reciprocal investment from the Board and MMA and a commitment to work on the issues until we find the right language that moves us all forward.

And I would like this commitment from the Board itself as well as its executive.

Rusty

From: Les Macdonald <[REDACTED]@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 12 July 2023 6:44 PM

To: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>; Lakshman Gunaratnam

<[REDACTED]@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board

<[REDACTED]@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>; Tennille Valensisi

<[REDACTED]@mowgriffith.org.au>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Let's get a draft of what you propose Russell so that we can discuss it, along with the Code of Conduct.

Les

Les MacDonald

CEO

Meals on Wheels NSW

Suite 0.2, 15 Bourke Rd

MASCOT NSW 2020

Office Hours: 7.30am – 4.00pm

Phone (02) [REDACTED] **Fax (02)** [REDACTED]



Email: [REDACTED]@nswmealsonwheels.org.au

Website: www.nswmealsonwheels.org.au

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From: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 6:28 PM

To: Les Macdonald <[REDACTED]@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>; Lakshman Gunaratnam

<[REDACTED]@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board

<[REDACTED]@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>; Tennille Valensisi

<[REDACTED]@mowgriffith.org.au>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Thanks Tennille I make only one further point.

I genuinely believe Les works towards the best interests of MOWNSW and for that reason I don't have any real issues. But it cannot be without capacity for feedback. Much like my own actions, or LGs actions or anyone else in the network. My feedback to LG has been to increase transparency, much like today's feedback to Les that the article is anything but helpful.

I agree that transparency is important here, but my concern is ongoing competing messages going from multiple sources. None of which hold an unbiased truth.

Therefore my proposition, aside from the code of conduct Les mentions, is this: that NSW MOW,

Future Fit and DoHAC draft and sign a mutually agreement joint statement to all NSW members outlining where we are, what is happening etc, so that we can genuinely set a new foundation. If that is not reasonable, and a process that ensures information is opened up to all, then im not sure what is.

Rusty

From: Les Macdonald <[REDACTED]@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 12 July 2023 6:02 PM

To: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>; Lakshman Gunaratnam

<[REDACTED]@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board

<[REDACTED]@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>; Tennille Valensisi

<[REDACTED]@mowgriffith.org.au>

Subject: Re: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

I think Tennille is the most adult in the room. I think we need to put aside the past and develop a code of conduct for our future relations with which we can all live and stick by. I am happy for us to develop a draft for consideration by all!

Thanks Tennille!!

Les

Les MacDonald

CEO

Meals on Wheels NSW

Suite 0.2, 15 Bourke Rd

MASCOT NSW 2020

Office Hours: 7.30am – 4.00pm

Phone (02) [REDACTED] **Fax (02)** [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]@nswmealsonwheels.org.au

Website: www.nswmealsonwheels.org.au

From: Tennille Valensisi | Griffith Meals on Wheels <[REDACTED]@mowgriffith.org.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 5:20:43 PM

To: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>; Les Macdonald

<[REDACTED]@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>; Lakshman Gunaratnam <[REDACTED]@milesmorgan.com.au>;

MOW NSW Board <[REDACTED]@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Subject: Re: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi all,

Firstly, I would just like to say thank you, the emails I have read today have been quite entertaining to say the least! I have been holding off on voicing my opinion for quite some time and let the powers that be have their say but I feel that enough is enough and I feel I should let you know my thoughts (and with respect to all parties, my opinion only).

AMOWA V Future Fit – this is very hard for me to comment on as it was before my time on the board, I have no opinions on what happened years ago, with the result being MMA granted the funding to deliver Future Fit. To be quite honest I could not care less, whatever happened, happened and there is no changing the past so let's just move on. NSW MOW V Future Fit – this I feel entitled to comment on, as I have been party to both boards. I feel that initially the intention of Future Fit was to look at our process and practices and get a grasp on what actually happens in the MOW space. As we all are aware, the differences between each service from city, to rural to remote rural to outback vary dramatically. It was an opportunity to look at standardising meals (and what constitutes a meal) for the Department to ensure fairness and equality. The development of a CRM (voluntary for services) also gave the opportunity to gather information. To me

Future Fit had (and still has) a lot of positives for the network. HOWEVER the secrecy that surrounds the Future Fit project is comparable to that of the CIA. I myself (after what has been described as being “collateral damage”) was told that the Governance Board no longer existed (although all other parties on that board remain part of the project?) have tried to obtain information from regarding where the project is up to (even signing up to the “Future Fit newsletter” under a different email address) and have received radio silence?? I really don’t understand? Surely a project that has been designed for Meals on Wheels and is for the Meals on Wheels “Network” should be shared and transparent with the Meals on Wheels “Network” not just the 12 or so select services. It is really disappointing. Rusty I appreciated the letter you recently sent giving us a small update on the project but a more in depth review would be appreciated, perhaps the “consultants” that apparently we are all so against would be able to do this? a show of good faith? I can see from the emails today that both the Department and MMA have an issue with our CEO. I find this really sad, Les has been in this role longer than all of us put together, his knowledge, experience and passion for the industry in my eyes should only be commended. He has seen Meals on Wheels go through so many different challenges (and there has been many) and we have always pulled through to the other side – under his guidance! I have the upmost respect for Les and know that with him at the Helm we will navigate to safe waters.

All in all (and I have discussed this with you Rusty at length) I feel the answer to all our problems here is transparency. If we all know exactly what is happening then there will be no room for anyone to say or do the wrong thing. We can agree to disagree on topics and work together to achieve a better outcome. Come on people swallow some pride and get together.

I wish no offence to any party (NSW MOW, DOH or MMA) and would like to see the Whole network whether they be supportive of Future Fit or not (each service has the right to decide) focussing on the most important part of our jobs and that is servicing the Vulnerable people in our communities.

I am happy to discuss my opinion at any time and look forward to a time where we can all work together for the greater good

Kind regards

Tennille

Tennille Valensisi

Griffith Meals on Wheels

PO Box 1514

16 Yambil St

GRIFFITH NSW 2680

Email: ^{s47F} [\[redacted\]@mowgriffith.org.au](mailto:[redacted]@mowgriffith.org.au)

Phone: 02 ^{s47F} [redacted]

Mobile: ^{s47F} [redacted]

www.griffithmealsonwheels.org.au

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From: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 4:54:56 PM

To: Les Macdonald <[REDACTED]@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>; Lakshman Gunaratnam <[REDACTED]@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board <[REDACTED]@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

I don't see anything implying a "no" to a board discussion

I remain, and I'm sure LG also remains exceedingly happy to attend with our bells on (scheduled leave notwithstanding)

From: Les Macdonald <[REDACTED]@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 12 July 2023 4:48 PM

To: Lakshman Gunaratnam <[REDACTED]@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board <[REDACTED]@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Cc: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Subject: Re: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

So I'm taking it that means no to meeting the board to get some rules around behavior???

Les MacDonald

CEO

Meals on Wheels NSW

Suite 0.2, 15 Bourke Rd

MASCOT NSW 2020

Office Hours: 7.30am – 4.00pm

Phone (02) [REDACTED] **Fax** (02) [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]@nswmealsonwheels.org.au

Website: www.nswmealsonwheels.org.au

From: Lakshman Gunaratnam <[REDACTED]@milesmorgan.com.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 4:36:43 PM

To: MOW NSW Board <[REDACTED]@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Cc: Les Macdonald <[REDACTED]@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>; HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Dear MOW NSW Board,

Miles Morgan Australia has presented to and spoken with yourselves on several occasions, NSW services (online and F2F) since this transformation program commenced. Furthermore, your CEO has been part of the raft of governance mechanisms to try and ensure you help NSW services and the communities they represent. I have also made multiple trips to Sydney to meet with your CEO. There are fully documented governance processes and associated records. There are members of this group that have been on said governance mechanisms. And there are also members of this group that we continue to work with.

Based on the tone of the recent emails, I can confirm we are not here to justify our role for something your national body actively sought (but then could not deliver) and something your services continue to derive benefit. I assume, given the frequency of the emails below (and others like it) your CEO speaks on behalf of the whole Board? And on that basis the Board supports all the communications to-date? If this is not the case, I would encourage you to engage amongst yourselves and with those services you seek to represent.

If your CEO is unable to talk to services about the value they have derived through forums of collaboration and respect, read the material provided at countless Future Fit governance meetings that he has endorsed as "the gold that we have been waiting for that is bound to get the interest of the network", look at the updates through a website he helped create, and if I need to continue to explain the blindingly obvious to what is happening across aged care – and the opportunity that exists for Meals on Wheels front line services – then I think your State

Association has bigger issues of relevance at play. Sadly, the words of your CEO suggest a fixation on relevance rather than actually making sure vulnerable Australians live in dignity.

I would highlight for your collective reference a recent article in **The (Adelaide) Advertiser**, where it appears AMOWA saw it appropriate to ask the Federal opposition to question the motives of services coming in to help fix a problem that your CEO and President have failed to address – for years in their capacity as members of AMOWA. Instead of thanking your colleagues in the network (s47F and s47F) who stood up and acted, this article attacks them. And from reading this article those responsible have sought to humiliate not just them, but seems to question their professional integrity. Perhaps those behind the article could have spent 5 minutes to learn about how governments have applauded the support of Meals on Wheels front line services for collaborating across borders to support communities in Victoria. I would hope the majority of Board members would prefer to share in the success of their colleagues (near and far in the network) rather than treat them in the manner set out through in this article. It's a real shame that, as the emails below suggest, self-interest is placed before people lives. A real shame.

In the words of Barrack Obama – we are here to get things done. If that's still not obvious to your CEO since the inception of this program started in 2021, then I don't think we can fix your internal failures.

Regards

Lakshman

Lakshman Gunaratnam

CEO

s47F

s47F [@milesmorgan.com.au](mailto:s47F@milesmorgan.com.au)



From: Les Macdonald <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 12:52 PM

To: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board <s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Only one way to find out Russell. Both of you come to the meeting. My view is that the board was looking for a finalisation of all this well before you. Let's have a meeting to clear the air, get some rules about how we will interact in future and move on!!

Les

[Les MacDonald](#)

CEO

Meals on Wheels NSW

Suite 0.2, 15 Bourke Rd

MASCOT NSW 2020

Office Hours: 7.30am – 4.00pm

Phone (02) s47F **Fax (02)** s47F



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From: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 1:08 PM

To: Les Macdonald <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>; MOW NSW Board <[s47G\(1\)\(a\)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

To put it simply, treating misinformation with misinformation is not useful.

I have a strong question mark over whether there is actually any intent to come to a joint resolution.

I am well and truly over this. Everyone needs to shut up, get over the past and rebase so that we can move on. I can't say it more clearly – everything being said, every bit of naval gazing, is doing absolutely nothing but detract.

Rusty

From: Les Macdonald <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 12 July 2023 12:33 PM

To: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>; MOW NSW Board <[s47G\(1\)\(a\)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Russell,

I have withheld speaking to the network about much of the devious behaviour that has been displayed in recent times until it was absolutely necessary to do so as many services have been asking us What the hell is going on with Future Fit. AS you are well aware we have been trying to arrange meetings of our board with Lakshman and you in more recent times, without evident success. It was necessary to finally give them some information to explain what has been happening that they, and we, have not been informed about by you or by MMA.

What we know is that much disinformation has been provided to the network about the Association. Let me be clear AGAIN. We have spent vast amounts of staff time and energy in promoting Future Fit to the network. That effort has not been rewarded by MMA with any acknowledgement at all. Indeed, we have been blackguarded to the network as getting in the road and making life difficult for MMA. We were also excluded from the Town Hall event, with you saying it was some services that did not want us present, and with them saying it was you that did not want us present. It is not hard to understand how suspicions arise when such directly conflicting narratives are spread.

You will note that in our recent webinar we provided Future Fit with the opportunity to make a video presentation of progress. Which they did. So it is difficult to argue that it is us failing to co-operate. After all the same courtesy was not extended to us at the Town Hall meeting. Then there is the case that services were informed at the Parliamentary Friends of Meals on Wheels event that our President had asked his Cousin by marriage to frustrate the event, which has been found by a subsequent detailed independent and expensive investigation to have no substance and to have been vexatious in nature.

The New South Wales board are a fine group of people who are committed to serving the needs of services but have been largely excluded from communications about Future Fit. It is hardly surprising that in the absence of any direct communication other narratives develop in the network to explain what otherwise cannot be explained.

We are unaware of any "shameful" actions taken by our Victorian colleagues. They have as far as we are

concerned always acted with integrity and openness, a characteristic not shared by MMA in their dealings in NSW.

My concern about NSW providing services in Victoria has nothing to do with s47F. They relate to my experience over many years in this sector that states and local communities have a high degree of ownership of vital community based services and are inclined to react negatively to another state coming in to their space. There has already been some of that reaction in social media and I think that has potential to damage our brand in Victoria. Incidentally I don't doubt that the service that s47F can provide is of a good quality. That is not the point. No opportunity in the form of a tender was given to Victorian organisations to take on these services. I guess we will see how community reaction develops in coming months and years.

Incidentally I do not despise any member services of ours in NSW or anywhere else for that matter. I simply point out that the group that I am referring to have views about the way our services should be organised that do not correspond with the views of the vast majority, but who feel that their views need to be required to be adopted by the rest of the network and that we should participate in that process. We share the view of the majority that it is a matter for them as to the way in which to organise themselves.

Having said all that I am still keen for you and Lakshman to come to a board meeting and to try to correct any "misinterpretations" or misunderstandings that currently exist in our board and in our network.

Regards,

Les

Les MacDonald

CEO

Meals on Wheels NSW

Suite 0.2, 15 Bourke Rd

MASCOT NSW 2020

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From: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 11:21 AM

To: Les Macdonald <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board <[s47G\(1\)\(a\)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)>

Subject: RE: NSWMOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

You are simply reflecting a narrative that serves certain purposes, and not what has actually happened and why. The information is useful for the narrative of which you seek to construct, but leads others to draw inferences that are patently incorrect. That is your prerogative. However, were you actually invested in discussing and resolving these issues you wouldn't send information like this out before said discussions – it is not an act of good faith when the goal is to come to a resolution of these concerns. It leads me to believe the NSWMOW board is not genuine on these issues.

Victoria is a classic case of certain individuals caring more about power and influence than the needs of older Australians. The actions taken by some of those individuals are exceedingly petty and shameful. Your reference to Victoria below leads me to believe you disagree with the notion of maintaining longstanding social connections to some of our most vulnerable because one or two individuals who are not party to commercial negotiations didn't get the ability to say what a good job they did to save the day. It is hokum to suggest this is about governance and not more about personalities.

I also believe you object that s47F was the one awarded the contract because he is one of these "small number of services" you seem to despise. Perhaps you might better reflect on the why and not the who.

s47F and LG have done a wonderful job in Whitehorse, and to detract from that is nothing but childish behaviour from those involved.

I assume that the majority of NSWMOW continue to care about the needs of clients and members, rather than holding grudges and point scoring.

Rusty

From: Les Macdonald <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 12 July 2023 10:43 AM

To: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board <[s47G\(1\)\(a\)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)>

Subject: RE: NSWMOV note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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Hi Russell,

I think the opportunity for you and Lakshman to talk to the full board will give both of you the chance to convince them that what I am saying does not reflect "reality" as you see it. I might also say that any understandings that I may have had have been garnered through direct communications with Lakshman, you, s47F and others in the small group around MMA and from reports coming in to me from members and from members of our board and AMOWA.

I am simply reflecting what has happened to not just us but AMOWA and Victoria as well, as a result of the actions of the consultant and that small number of services who have been fostering a process of division and dissension that frankly I have not experienced before in twenty years with Meals on Wheels. It may well be that in many instances we have been and are being misled and I am open to you correcting what has been said to us and about us by the Consultant and its small number of acolytes within our membership, but the reality is that those assertions and actions have been destructive and divisive as has been demonstrated recently by outrageous, unwarranted and untrue allegations made about members of our board as a means of causing division and to undertake an attempted coup against members of that board, as was done with the board of AMOWA. Indeed I have recently been told that one of the acolytes has expressed puzzlement and frustration at the re-structuring of the AMOWA board, as that person felt they had been successful at delivering the coup de grace to it apparently. That reflects the general approach of destroying structures and processes that have served us well for decades, without any idea of what to replace them with and without any justification.

We are in the process of putting together a document that sets out all of facts behind what I have said to our network on these unfortunate matters and that could be discussed with you and Lakshman at a meeting of the board. As I have said on far too many occasions we at the Association remain committed to getting whatever does finally emerge from Future Fit for our members, but we will not allow the process by which that is being progressed to destroy what we have spent those twenty years in building, and that is an integrated and co-operative network that uses its collective strengths to well serve the communities of NSW. I look forward to you and Lakshman coming to a board meeting where all these matters can be discussed openly and transparently and some satisfactory resolution achieved.

Regards,

Les

Les MacDonald

CEO

Meals on Wheels NSW

Suite 0.2, 15 Bourke Rd

MASCOT NSW 2020

Office Hours: 7.30am – 4.00pm

Phone (02) s47F **Fax (02)** s47F



Email: s47F [@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)

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From: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 9:32 AM

To: Les Macdonald <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>; MOW NSW Board

<[s47G\(1\)\(a\)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)>

Subject: NSWMOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Les,

If this is your genuine understanding of the world then this raises a number of interesting questions for me – simply as a decent chunk of this does not accurately reflect history.

I can only choose to believe that you have misinterpreted or have been misled in a number of areas. The alternative would only raise more concerns.

Russell Herald

Assistant Secretary

Home Support Operations Branch

Home and Residential Division | **Ageing and Aged Care Group**

Department of Health and Aged Care

(W) 02 6289 s47F (M) s47F

Executive Assistant: s47E(c), s47F

s47E(c), s47F @health.gov.au (W) 02 6289 s47E(c), s47F

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From: [Lakshman Gunaratnam](#)
To: [HERALD, Russell](#)
Subject: RE: FW: NSWMOOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Thursday, 13 July 2023 10:29:24 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.jpg](#)
[image003.jpg](#)
[image004.jpg](#)
[image005.jpg](#)
[image006.jpg](#)
[image007.jpg](#)
[image008.png](#)
[image009.png](#)
[image010.jpg](#)
[image011.jpg](#)
[image012.png](#)
[image013.png](#)

Thanks Rusty. Not sure why I didn't get S47F email. I haven't blocked anyone from emails or my mobile. Appreciate you sending it on.

Lakshman Gunaratnam
CEO

S47F

S47F [@milesmorgan.com.au](#)



From: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, July 13, 2023 9:26 AM
To: Lakshman Gunaratnam <S47F@milesmorgan.com.au>
Subject: FW: FW: NSWMOOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

From: S47F [@gmail.com](#)

Sent: Thursday, 13 July 2023 9:55 AM

To: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Subject: Re: FW: NSWMOOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi Russell,

I do not wish to cause more problems, so am just advising you that this email to LG has been returned stating for some reason He has blocked me from sending him emails.

I would appreciate you forwarding it onto him, so he is aware I am not deliberately excluding him from my correspondence.

Regards

S47F

On Thu, 13 Jul 2023 at 9:45 am, S47F [@gmail.com](#) wrote:

Hi Les,

Good morning everyone on this fine July morning, a bit cool here, but the sun is trying to come out.

I have been a volunteer with meals on wheels for over 30 years and worked with our CEO Les since he joined our peak body some 20 odd years ago.

Les has worked tirelessly in the best interest of MOW and I would like you Les, and everyone in this email to know I support Les completely.

I am looking forward to all concerned moving forward together in a positive way.

That said, I intend getting back to doing what I like doing, volunteering to help look after the oldies in my community, by providing good nourishing food and social support.

An elderly Aboriginal lady I met at the top end of Australia some 15 years ago, when discussing ongoing government changes to the welfare system, gave me her opinion:

"Same book, different cover."

I leave it to you all to decide if you agree or disagree.

Regards

S47F

On Wed, 12 Jul 2023 at 7:06 pm, Les Macdonald S47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au wrote:

For info

[Les MacDonald](#)

CEO

Meals on Wheels NSW

Suite 0.2, 15 Bourke Rd

MASCOT NSW 2020

Office Hours: 7.30am – 4.00pm

Phone (02) S47F Fax (02) S47F



Email: S47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au

Website: www.nswmealsonwheels.org.au

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<http://www.youtube.com/user/MOWNSW>



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From: Les Macdonald

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 7:04 PM

To: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Subject: RE: NSWMOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi Russell,

I would have thought that a draft was something we could all use as the basis for such discussions. Our board has never ceased to have a commitment to Future Fit and so it seems to me that we need some definitions about where Future Fit starts and ends and where the Association's role starts and ends and where the Department's role starts and ends and what are the devices put in place to co-ordinate those roles. I'm happy for us to do a draft as the basis for discussion towards the language you talk about Russell.

Les

Les MacDonald

CEO

Meals on Wheels NSW

Suite 0.2, 15 Bourke Rd

[MASCOT NSW 2020](#)

[Office](#) Hours: 7.30am – 4.00pm

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From: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 6:55 PM

To: Les Macdonald <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>; Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board <[s47G\(1\)\(a\)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)>; Tennille Valensisi <s47F@mowgriffith.org.au>

Subject: RE: NSWMOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

No, that doesn't work for me

I'm not going to invest in a process of drafting something if I don't have agreement to a reciprocal investment from the Board and MMA and a commitment to work on the issues until we find the right language that moves us all forward.

And I would like this commitment from the Board itself as well as its executive.

Rusty

From: Les Macdonald <s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 12 July 2023 6:44 PM

To: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>; Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board <[s47G\(1\)\(a\)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)>; Tennille Valensisi <s47F@mowgriffith.org.au>

Subject: RE: NSWMOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Let's get a draft of what you propose Russell so that we can discuss it, along with the Code of Conduct.

Les

Les MacDonald

CEO

Meals on Wheels NSW

Suite 0.2, [15 Bourke Rd](#)

[MASCOT NSW 2020](#)

[Office](#) Hours: 7.30am – 4.00pm

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From: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 6:28 PM

To: Les Macdonald <s47f@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>; Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47f@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board <[s47g\(1\)\(a\)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47g(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)>; Tennille Valensisi <s47f@mowgriffith.org.au>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Thanks Tennille I make only one further point.

I genuinely believe Les works towards the best interests of MOWNSW and for that reason I don't have any real issues. But it cannot be without capacity for feedback. Much like my own actions, or LGs actions or anyone else in the network. My feedback to LG has been to increase transparency, much like today's feedback to Les that the article is anything but helpful.

I agree that transparency is important here, but my concern is ongoing competing messages going from multiple sources. None of which hold an unbiased truth.

Therefore my proposition, aside from the code of conduct Les mentions, is this: that NSW MOW, Future Fit and DoHAC draft and sign a mutually agreement joint statement to all NSW members outlining where we are, what is happening etc, so that we can genuinely set a new foundation.

If that is not reasonable, and a process that ensures information is opened up to all, then im not sure what is.

Rusty

From: Les Macdonald <s47f@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 12 July 2023 6:02 PM

To: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>; Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47f@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board <[s47g\(1\)\(a\)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47g(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)>; Tennille Valensisi <s47f@mowgriffith.org.au>

Subject: Re: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

I think Tennille is the most adult in the room. I think we need to put aside the past and develop a code of conduct for our future relations with which we can all live and stick by. I am happy for us to develop a draft for consideration by all!

Thanks Tennille!!

Les

Les MacDonald

CEO

Meals on Wheels NSW

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Office Hours: 7.30am – 4.00pm

Phone (02) s47f Fax (02) s47f

Email <s47f@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>

Website: www.nswmealsonwheels.org.au

From: Tennille Valensisi | Griffith Meals on Wheels <s47f@mowgriffith.org.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 5:20:43 PM

To: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>; Les Macdonald <s47f@nswmealsonwheels.org.au>; Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47f@milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board <[s47g\(1\)\(a\)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47g(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)>

Subject: Re: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi all,

Firstly, I would just like to say thankyou, the emails I have read today have been quite entertaining to say the least! I have been holding off on voicing my opinion for quite some time and let the powers that be have their say but I feel that enough is enough and I feel I should let you know my thoughts (and with respect to all parties, my opinion only).

AMOWA V Future Fit – this is very hard for me to comment on as it was before my time on the board, I have no opinions on what happened years ago, with the result being MMA granted the funding to deliver Future Fit. To be quite honest I could not care less, whatever happened, happened and there is no changing the past so let's just move on.

NSWMOW V Future Fit – this I feel entitled to comment on, as I have been party to both boards. I feel that initially the intention of Future Fit was to look at our process and practices and get a grasp on what actually happens in the MOW space. As we all are aware, the differences between each service from city, to rural to remote rural to outback vary dramatically. It was an opportunity to look at standardising meals (and what constitutes a meal) for the Department to ensure fairness and equality. The development of a CRM (voluntary for services) also gave the opportunity to gather information. To me Future Fit had (and still has) a lot of positives for the network. HOWEVER the secrecy that surrounds the Future Fit project is comparable to that of the CIA. I myself

(after what has been described as being “collateral damage”) was told that the Governance Board no longer existed (although all other parties on that board remain part of the project?) have tried to obtain information from regarding where the project is up to (even signing up to the “Future Fit newsletter” under a different email address) and have received radio silence?? I really don’t understand? Surely a project that has been designed for Meals on Wheels and is for the Meals on Wheels “Network” should be shared and transparent with the Meals on Wheels “Network” not just the 12 or so select services. It is really disappointing. Rusty I appreciated the letter you recently sent giving us a small update on the project but a more in depth review would be appreciated, perhaps the “consultants” that apparently we are all so against would be able to do this? a show of good faith?

I can see from the emails today that both the Department and MMA have an issue with our CEO. I find this really sad, Les has been in this role longer than all of us put together, his knowledge, experience and passion for the industry in my eyes should only be commended. He has seen Meals on Wheels go through so many different challenges (and there has been many) and we have always pulled through to the other side – under his guidance! I have the upmost respect for Les and know that with him at the Helm we will navigate to safe waters.

All in all (and I have discussed this with you Rusty at length) I feel the answer to all our problems here is transparency. If we all know exactly what is happening then there will be no room for anyone to say or do the wrong thing. We can agree to disagree on topics and work together to achieve a better outcome. Come on people swallow some pride and get together.

I wish no offence to any party (NSW MOW, DOH or MMA) and would like to see the Whole network whether they be supportive of Future Fit or not (each service has the right to decide) focussing on the most important part of our jobs and that is servicing the Vulnerable people in our communities.

I am happy to discuss my opinion at any time and look forward to a time where we can all work together for the greater good

Kind regards

Tennille

Tennille Valensisi

Griffith Meals on Wheels

PO Box 1514

16 Yambil St

GRIFFITH NSW 2680

Email: s47F [redacted] [@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)

Phone: s47F [redacted]

Mobile: s47F [redacted]

www.griffithmealsonwheels.org.au

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From: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 4:54:56 PM

To: Les Macdonald <s47F [redacted] [@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)>; Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F [redacted] [@milesmorgan.com.au](mailto:s47F@milesmorgan.com.au)>; MOW NSW Board <s47G(1)(a) [redacted] [@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

I don’t see anything implying a “no” to a board discussion

I remain, and I’m sure LG also remains exceedingly happy to attend with our bells on (scheduled leave notwithstanding)

From: Les Macdonald <s47F [redacted] [@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)>

Sent: Wednesday, 12 July 2023 4:48 PM

To: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F [redacted] [@milesmorgan.com.au](mailto:s47F@milesmorgan.com.au)>; MOW NSW Board <s47G(1)(a) [redacted] [@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)>

Cc: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Subject: Re: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

So I’m taking it that means no to meeting the board to get some rules around behavior???

Les MacDonald

CEO

Meals on Wheels NSW

Suite 0.2, 15 Bourke Rd

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Office Hours: 7.30am – 4.00pm

Phone (02) s47F [redacted] **Fax (02)** s47F [redacted]

Email: s47F [redacted] [@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)

Website: www.nswmealsonwheels.org.au

From: Lakshman Gunaratnam <s47F [redacted] [@milesmorgan.com.au](mailto:s47F@milesmorgan.com.au)>

Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 4:36:43 PM

To: MOW NSW Board <s47G(1)(a) [redacted] [@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47G(1)(a)@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)>

Cc: Les Macdonald <s47F [redacted] [@nswmealsonwheels.org.au](mailto:s47F@nswmealsonwheels.org.au)>; HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>

Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Dear MOW NSW Board,

Miles Morgan Australia has presented to and spoken with yourselves on several occasions, NSW services (online and F2F) since this transformation program commenced. Furthermore, your CEO has been part of the raft of governance mechanisms to try and ensure you help NSW services and the communities they represent. I have also made multiple trips to Sydney to meet with your CEO. There are fully documented governance processes and associated records. There are members of this group that have been on said governance mechanisms. And there are also members of this group that we continue to work with.

Based on the tone of the recent emails, I can confirm we are not here to justify our role for something your national body actively sought (but then could not deliver) and something your services continue to derive benefit. I assume, given the frequency of the

emails below (and others like it) your CEO speaks on behalf of the whole Board? And on that basis the Board supports all the communications to-date? If this is not the case, I would encourage you to engage amongst yourselves and with those services you seek to represent.

If your CEO is unable to talk to services about the value they have derived through forums of collaboration and respect, read the material provided at countless Future Fit governance meetings that he has endorsed as "the gold that we have been waiting for that is bound to get the interest of the network", look at the updates through a website he helped create, and if I need to continue to explain the blindingly obvious to what is happening across aged care – and the opportunity that exists for Meals on Wheels front line services – then I think your State Association has bigger issues of relevance at play. Sadly, the words of your CEO suggest a fixation on relevance rather than actually making sure vulnerable Australians live in dignity.

I would highlight for your collective reference a recent article in **The (Adelaide) Advertiser**, where it appears AMOWA saw it appropriate to ask the Federal opposition to question the motives of services coming in to help fix a problem that your CEO and President have failed to address – for years in their capacity as members of AMOWA. Instead of thanking your colleagues in the network (S47F and S47F) who stood up and acted, this article attacks them. And from reading this article those responsible have sought to humiliate not just them, but seems to question their professional integrity. Perhaps those behind the article could have spent 5 minutes to learn about how governments have applauded the support of Meals on Wheels front line services for collaborating across borders to support communities in Victoria. I would hope the majority of Board members would prefer to share in the success of their colleagues (near and far in the network) rather than treat them in the manner set out through in this article.

It's a real shame that, as the emails below suggest, self-interest is placed before people lives. A real shame.

In the words of Barrack Obama – we are here to get things done. If that's still not obvious to your CEO since the inception of this program started in 2021, then I don't think we can fix your internal failures.

Regards

Lakshman

Lakshman Gunaratnam
CEO

S47F

S47F @milesmorgan.com.au



From: Les Macdonald S47F @nswmealsonwheels.org.au
Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 12:52 PM
To: HERALD, Russell <Russell.Herald@health.gov.au>
Cc: Lakshman Gunaratnam <S47F @milesmorgan.com.au>; MOW NSW Board <S47G(1)(a) @nswmealsonwheels.org.au>
Subject: RE: NSW MOW note [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Only one way to find out Russell. Both of you come to the meeting. My view is that the board was looking for a finalisation of all this well before you. Let's have a meeting to clear the air, get some rules about how we will interact in future and move on!!

Les

[Les MacDonald](#)

CEO

Meals on Wheels NSW

[Suite 0.2, 15 Bourke Rd](#)

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