

s47E(c), s47F

From: s47E(c), s47F
Sent: Thursday, 26 June 2025 2:27 PM
To: Sector Support & Ageing Research
Subject: MB25-000898 - COTA Meeting with Minister Rae - June 2025 [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: MB25-000898.docx.pdf

FYI: MB25-000898

Copy of finalised brief re: COTA Meeting with Minister Rae - June 2025

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a/g Assistant Director - Sector Support and Ageing Research Section
Ageing Policy, Systems and Evidence Branch

Systems, Engagement and Contributions Division | Ageing and Aged Care Group
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47F

This email comes to you from Ngunnawal and Ngambri Country
Location: Yaradhang, Level 7 South
GPO Box 9848, Canberra ACT 2601

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing acknowledges First Nations peoples as the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to all Elders both past and present.

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Australian Government
**Department of Health,
 Disability and Ageing**

Meeting Brief
MB25-000898
Version (1)

Date sent to MO: 5/06/2025

To: Minister Rae

Subject: MEETING BRIEF - COTA

Comments:			
Contact Officer:	s47E(c), s47F	a/g Assistant Director, Ageing Policy, Systems and Evidence Branch Systems, Engagement and Contributions Division	s47E(c), s47F
Clearance Officer:	Travis Power	Assistant Secretary, Ageing Policy, Systems and Evidence Branch Systems, Engagement and Contributions Division	s47E(c), s47F

Date / Time: Friday 6 June 2025, 12:30 PM to 1:00 PM

Meeting Type/Location: Electorate Office, 100 Mckenzie St, Melton, Victoria 3337

Traditional Custodians: Wathaurong (*WO-thuh-rong*) Country

Desired Outcomes:

Maintain open communication and strong relationship with COTA Australia, particularly in relation to the upcoming aged care reform rollout.

Key Attendees	Title	Organisation	Mobile No
Patricia (Pat) Sparrow	CEO	COTA Australia	s47F

Purpose:

To maintain strong engagement with COTA Australia following the deferral of the commencement of the *Aged Care Act 2024* (the Act) from 1 July to 1 November 2025.

Key Matters/Issues:

- On 4 June 2025, you and Minister Butler announced a delay to the commencement of the Act to 1 November 2025.

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- The decision to postpone the Act commencement is a result of many conversations with the sector, s47E(d) s47E(d).
- COTA Australia (attributed to Ms Sparrow) has welcomed the deferred commencement date in a media statement, stating it 'acknowledges that more time is needed to inform older people about the changes, to support its successful implementation and build confidence in the system'. A copy of the COTA Australia press release on the deferral is at Attachment B.
- Consultation occurred with COTA Australia and the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission in March 2025 to discuss the final draft strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards and alignment to the Statement of Rights.
- s47G(1)(b)

Sensitivities:

s47G(1)(b)

s47G(1)(a)

s47C

Background:

- Ms Sparrow is a current member of the National Aged Care Advisory Council, the Aged Care Transition Taskforce and its sub-working group on Education and Training.
- Ms Sparrow was invited to Deputy Secretary Sonja Stewart's ad-hoc Aged Care Transition Taskforce meeting on Wednesday 4 June 2025.

Attachments:

- A. Biography of Ms Patricia (Pat) Sparrow
 - B. COTA Australia media on the deferral of the *Aged Care Act 2024* commencement
- s47C

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Biography of Ms Patricia (Pat) Sparrow

Ms Sparrow is the CEO for COTA Australia. Her goal is to eliminate ageism. Having studied ageism as part of her BA in Social Sciences, she was inspired to volunteer in home care, and do meal runs.

Committed to building a more inclusive Australia that appreciates and welcomes the contribution of older people, Ms Sparrow's career spans community, disability, and aged care, health, and advocacy roles. She has experience from perspective of not-for-profit, public service, advocacy, Ministerial office, and most importantly, as a support to her own ageing family members.



Ms Sparrow has worked consistently to improve the choice and control older people have in their lives, working to reform aged care to fund the individual's care, rather than the provider, and following through to make sure the system works. She sees housing, full recognition of First Nations peoples, and workplace ageism as the next big challenges.

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COTA Australia media on the deferral of the *Aged Care Act 2024* commencement

June 4, 2025

Today's announcement of a four month delay to the commencement of the new Aged Care Act, including the Support at Home program, is important to ensure older people have time to understand what the upcoming changes mean for them, COTA Australia says.

COTA Australia Chief Executive Officer, Patricia Sparrow, said COTA Australia has been listening to older people about their experiences to date and their concerns about the lack of individualised information from aged care providers and the Government.

Last week COTA and OPAN wrote to the Government to advise that it's become clear that a time-limited delay to the Act – which was due to come into effect on 1 July 2025 – was necessary to avoid confusion and make sure older people and their families are informed about how the new system will work.

"We welcome the Federal Government's response to our call for a new commencement date for the Aged Care Act. The move to a 1 November 2025 commencement date acknowledges that more time is needed to inform older people about the changes, to support its successful implementation and build confidence in the system," Ms Sparrow said.

"The new Aged Care Act is an important step towards a better future for current and future generations of older Australians – one that puts their rights and dignity at the centre of the care system. We wanted a 1 July start date so people didn't have to wait any longer for their rights than they already have, but ultimately, we concluded it's far more important to get it right and ensure that older people understand what will happen for them.

Ms Sparrow said that the Federal Government and aged care providers must use this additional time to ensure the system is set up for a smooth implementation on 1 November. This needs to include Services Australia starting the process of providing older Australians with the critical financial information they need as soon as possible.

"COTA Australia is calling on the government to continue to release extra packages of support for people living at home and reduce the home care package wait list even with the delayed start for the new Support at Home program.

"We don't want to see older Australians continuing to experience long wait times for the support they need to remain independent at home. No one should be waiting for longer than 30 days for these critical supports.

"This delay provides an opportunity to work with older Australians and their supporters to explain what the changes will mean for them. This time must be used wisely to iron out any remaining implementation issues and prioritise supporting older people. The system must be ready to go from 1 November."

Media contact: ^{s47F} or ^{s47F}

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Minister	Minister Rae
PDR Number	MB25-000898
Subject	**URGENT** Meeting Brief - COTA
Contact Officer	s47E(c), s47F [Redacted]
Clearance Officer	Travis Power s47E(c), s47F [Redacted]
Division/Branch	Ageing and Aged Care Systems, Engagement and Contributions Division
Has Budget Branch been consulted if there are financial implications?	Not Applicable

Adviser/DLO comments:	Returned to Dept for: REDRAFT ☐ NFA ☐
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