



**frsa**

**Family & Relationship  
Services Australia**

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# **POLICY & PROCEDURES MANUAL**

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**UPDATED APRIL 2014**

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# 1 GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT POLICIES

## 1.1 BOARD OPERATIONS

### ROLE AND FUNCTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors (the 'Board') is the governing body of FRSA. The Board has broad powers to make decisions and exercise the powers and functions of the organisation within the constraints of the FRSA Constitution, the *Corporations Act 2001* and all Commonwealth and ACT legislation.

The purpose and role of the Board is:

- ▶ To identify, protect and promote the mission and goals of FRSA – i.e. what it plans to achieve, where it wants to be and how it plans to get there.
- ▶ To act strategically, through analysis and planning to position and guide the organisation to achieve the mission and goals.
- ▶ To ensure that FRSA complies with relevant statutory and legal requirements as well as obligations to staff, funding bodies, members and other stakeholders.
- ▶ To monitor the effectiveness of the organisation.
- ▶ To appoint the Executive Director and evaluate his or her performance.
- ▶ To set organisation policy and monitor the implementation of good practice within the organisation.

### FIDUCIARY DUTY

Directors are legally bound to act in the best interests of the organisation and to take all possible care to operate the organisation in compliance with relevant legislation and fiduciary obligations. Directors should be familiar with their responsibilities under the *Corporations Act 2001*, including (but not limited) to:

- ▶ A general duty to act honestly and with reasonable diligence in the duties of office;
- ▶ Not to use their position, or information acquired due to their position, to gain an advantage for themselves or any other person, or to cause damage to FRSA;
- ▶ To disclose any direct or indirect interests in any contract or proposed contract to which FRSA is or may be a party.

Recent case law gives rise to another obligation – that being to disclose information to members wherever directors gain information or knowledge in the course of governing the organisation that could give rise to a position of privilege or competitive advantage over other members.

### INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of Directors and Office Bearers are documented in Duty Statements that are provided to each person upon commencement.

While it is important to have a mix of skills on the Board Individual directors do not serve a representation function. All directors must act in the best interests of the membership overall.

### PRIVILEGE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

It is important to ensure that serving on the FRSA Board provides no real or perceived advantage to individual Directors or the organisations in which they work. Directors are encouraged to identify and declare potential or perceived conflicts of interest, including those that may apply to other directors to ensure appropriate steps are taken (see 1.8 Conflict of Interest Policy).

Wherever possible and appropriate, information provided to directors will also be provided to all member organisations. If this is not appropriate, information obtained in the course of serving as a director must be treated confidentially and not used for any improper purpose or competitive advantage.

Board meetings, papers and discussions are confidential to allow for full and frank debate. Decisions and outcomes will be shared with members and other stakeholders through a variety of mechanisms – updates in the FRSA e-bulletin, member briefings and public statements but without revealing individual positions or arguments made during the discussion.

## **DETERMINING OFFICE BEARERS**

The election of office bearers is to be the first item of business at the first face to face Board meeting after the AGM. Each candidate should be prepared to make a statement and answer questions in the presence of the other candidate/s about what they can contribute to FRSA. Voting will be by secret ballot. In the event of a tied vote, a further statement and questioning will occur with a further vote taken.

Office Bearers have specific responsibilities, summarised in the table below but described more fully in Position Descriptions.

Position	Functions
Chairperson	<p>Manages the operations of the Board.</p> <p>Chairs Board meetings and General Meetings of members.</p> <p>Acts as official representative of FRSA, including to the media.</p> <p>Follows up decisions of the Board to ensure implementation.</p> <p>Liaises between the Board and the Executive Director.</p> <p>Acts on behalf of the Board in emergency or urgent situations.</p>
Vice Chairperson	<p>Assists the Chairperson in the above functions.</p> <p>Acts as Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson.</p>
Chair Finance Committee	<p>Monitors income and expenditure of the organisation.</p> <p>Provides oversight on record keeping and financial management systems.</p> <p>Reports to the Board and Members on income, expenditure, assets and liquidity.</p> <p>Assists the Board and Executive Director with financial planning.</p>
Company Secretary	<p>Support the Board and Senior Management on matters of corporate governance, board operation, corporate decision-making, and shareholder and board/management relations; and</p> <p>Overall management of the company secretariat risk and compliance (including legal) and internal audit and insurance functions of the company.</p>

## **BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

Board members are elected by the membership or co opted in line with the provisions of the Constitution. The FRSA Constitution prescribes the number of Board positions, the tenure of positions and the method of nomination and election. At February 2009 the constitution allows for 7 elected positions with the option to co-opt another 2 Directors to expand the skills or diversity of the Board at any given time.

## COOPTION OF BOARD MEMBERS

When considering the cooption of the FRSA Board Members, the following steps are recommended:

- ▶ Taking account of FRSA's strategic directions, conduct a skills audit of Directors to determine areas of strength, weakness or gaps. This may consider the following mix of skills:
  - a. Governance, legal and financial
  - b. Marketing / fundraising
  - c. Policy analysis and development
  - d. Experience in advocacy and representation
  - e. Contemporary expertise in relevant fields of research
  - f. Experience in the delivery, management or evaluation of the diversity of FRSP Services
  - g. Expertise in related service sectors
  - h. Knowledge and understanding of the needs of specific population groups or communities (eg rural/remote, Indigenous, CALD).
  - i. Key connections and relationships across stakeholder networks
- ▶ Identify desirable skills that would complement or supplement the skills mix available to the Board.
- ▶ Agree on a process and timeframe for identifying candidates with the desirable skills, this might include:
  - j. Nomination by Directors
  - k. Invitation to members
  - l. Advertised vacancy or call for expressions of interest
  - m. Review unsuccessful candidates nominated for the Board in any recent election process
- ▶ A list of candidates is developed and an order of preference determined either through discussion or secret ballot before candidates are approached by the Chairperson and invited to take up a coopted position until the next AGM.

## FILLING OF CASUAL BOARD VACANCIES

From time to time the resignation of a FRSA Board member 'mid-term' will result in a casual vacancy. In such instances, the Board will identify an appropriate individual to fill the vacancy having given consideration to any gaps in skills or expertise as well as the Boards combined capacity to address the needs of the membership.

Casual Board vacancies will be filled until the expiration of the incumbent's term.

## BOARD INDUCTION

Individuals nominating for a position on the FRSA Board will be asked to confirm on the Nomination Form that they have read the job description and key documents provided, that they understand and are prepared to take on the responsibilities of being a Director.

Newly appointed Directors will be provided with an Induction Kit that includes:

- Consent to Act as Director;
- FRSA Constitution;
- FRSA Policy and Procedures Manual;
- Board Travel Policy & Guidance;
- Declaration of Interest Form;
- Directors Position Statement (includes Code of Conduct);
- Board Contact List;
- FRSA Strategic Plan 2010-13;
- Current List of FRSA Members; and
- Copy of FRSA Associations Insurance policy which includes Directors & Officers insurance.

Newly appointed Directors will be provided with a briefing by the Chair and/or the Executive Director together with the opportunity to visit FRSA and meet the staff team. They will also be invited to identify areas of strength and expertise that they bring to the Board as well as any areas in which they feel they may need additional support, training or other assistance.

## **BOARD DIVERSITY**

FRSA has a commitment to representing the diversity of the family relationship services sector, including the diversity of the workforce and client populations.

FRSA will make reasonable accommodations to support diversity on the Board and ask members to give consideration to this when participating in Board elections. Candidates from rural and remote areas, small organisations and those with expertise in new or emerging program areas are encouraged to nominate for the Board. Individuals with family commitments, disability or health related needs or other factors that might otherwise inhibit participation on a national governing body are also encouraged to apply.

## **BOARD MEETINGS**

The Board must conduct meetings in accordance with the requirements of the FRSA Constitution and will comply with formal meeting procedures, including (but not limited to): notice of meeting, agenda, adjourning or postponing meetings; minute keeping and approval, processes for proposing, debating and deciding resolutions of the Board.

Meeting procedures have been developed to provide some guidance. However, the Board has autonomy to change meeting procedures at any time within the bounds of the FRSA Constitution.

Board discussions are confidential unless clearly stated otherwise and a report from Board meetings will be included in the FRSA Newsletter. Minutes will include sufficient detail to contextualise the decisions made but avoid attributing statements to individual Directors. Minutes will not be circulated but may be provided to members if requested – Directors are to keep this in mind when approving minutes at each subsequent meeting.

## **OBTAINING ADVICE**

Directors have a right and a responsibility to seek information and/or advice that will enable them to make an informed contribution to Board deliberations and decision-making. Where there is a cost associated with the obtaining of information or advice, FRSA will only cover that cost if the board as a whole or the Board Executive have considered and approved the expenditure.

## **BOARD COMMITTEES**

The Board may establish from time to time such committees it requires to assist it carry out its duties in specific areas. Each Committee will have a formal charter. The Executive Director will be an ex officio member of Board Committees.

## **BOARD TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT**

FRSA seeks to ensure that Board Members have the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to make a meaningful contribution to the organisation. We also have a commitment to making their time on the FRSA Board a positive and beneficial experience.

The FRSA Annual Budget includes a provision for Board training & development. Typically the use of these funds will be decided at a Board meeting and it is most likely that training and development activities will be inclusive of all board members.

Individual training / development may be considered, particularly where this relates to a specific governance function such as:

- Chairperson
- Finance Committee
- Company Secretary

The Board may also consider approving a contribution towards training costs, where an individual seeks to undertake training that enhances their skills or knowledge in governance.

## **EVALUATION**

The Board will review its own performance at least annually. KPIs for individual Directors and the Board overall include:

1. Directors attend 75% of scheduled meetings.
2. Directors are adequately prepared for board meetings and make regular contribution to board deliberations.
3. Directors notify the Board of perceived as well as actual conflicts of interest.
4. The Board acts cohesively, demonstrating independence and consistency in decision-making.
5. The vision, mission and strategic goals of FRSA are established and clearly guide the activities of the organisation.
6. The Board composition and mix of competencies are reviewed to align with the organisation's strategic goals and ensure the Board has capacity to respond to the emerging needs of FRSA members.
7. The Executive Director is evaluated against appropriate performance measures.

## **CHANGING EMPLOYMENT STATUS**

FRSA Directors are appointed as individuals and not as organisation representatives. If, during the course of their tenure on the Board, they change employment status they should inform FRSA and declare any new connections or potential areas of interest that could give rise to a conflict. There is no requirement that they resign from the Board provided that they continue to meet the requirement to maintain a membership connection to FRSA as set out in the FRSA Constitution.

## **REPRESENTATION AND COMMUNICATION**

The FRSA Chair and Executive Director are the spokespersons for FRSA but individual Board Members also speak for FRSA (with the authority of the Board) when speaking in support of agreed positions and decisions or when asked to represent FRSA on advisory or reference group or in forums with members and stakeholders.

FRSA Board Members act in the best interests of FRSA and its member organisations at all times, portraying the work of the organisation and the membership in a positive and respectful light, embracing diversity and demonstrating respect. Complaints or negative feedback about FRSA or any of its members will be handled in accordance with the Complaints and Feedback Policy (2.2).

FRSA recognises that Board Members will sometimes need to represent other positions, networks or organisations and this may involve articulating alternative positions – in these circumstances Board Members must be clear about their role and who they speak for, it may be important to acknowledge there is a diversity of positions and demonstrate respect for that diversity.

## **BOARD OBSERVERS**

From time to time the FRSA Board may appoint an Observer to attend and participate in Board Meetings without the responsibilities of a Director. Observers inform and support the work of the Board and may be asked to Chair sub-committee or advisory groups. There is a Position Description for this role.

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## 1.2 FRSA BOARD MEETING PROCEDURES

### FIRST MEETING AFTER AGM

The first meeting of the FRSA Board following each AGM will determine:

1. The position of Chairperson and any other Office Bearer positions as determined by the Board.
2. Whether to expand the Board through co-option, with consideration to the mix of skills and diversity of representation amongst those appointed.
3. Terms of newly elected or co-opted Directors where there is an option for 1 or 2 year terms.
4. Meeting schedule for the year or part thereof – including the mix of face-to-face and teleconference meetings.
5. Delegated authorities including the delegated authority of the Executive Officer to make expenditure decisions.

Either at this meeting or shortly thereafter, Directors are requested to review the following documents for endorsement or review:

1. FRSA Director's Position Description;
2. FRSA Board Protocols; and
3. FRSA Policy & Procedures Manual.

### MEETING GUIDELINES

By resolution of the Board the quorum for a meeting of Directors is equal to half the number of Directors plus 1.

1. The Board's tasks are to:
  - a. Provide FRSA with effective governance;
  - b. Set/review the strategic direction; and
  - c. Monitor the performance of the organisation.
- ▶ While Board decision-making will observe good process, outcomes will be action oriented.
- ▶ Formal motions need to be moved and accepted. Motions not involving legal or financial matters need only be moved, no seconder required.
- ▶ All board members are required to respect the Chair (see Code of Conduct), respect other board members and respect the process by which decisions are made.
- ▶ The scheduled dates for Board meetings will be set and maintained.
- ▶ Meeting venues may rotate throughout the states, alternating with Canberra, to allow face to face regional meetings to occur at the end of the first day.
- ▶ The FRSA Board will determine the frequency of meetings and teleconferences annually. It is anticipated that the Board would meet not less than twice in a year and not more than 6 times.

## MEETING PROCEDURES

1. The Board meeting agenda will be structured around strategic goals and prepared with relevant background material. These documents focus on
  - issues which have arisen, and which the Board should consider;
  - reports on major issues, for information, discussion and/or decision.
- ▶ When considering recommendations from the Executive Director, a sub-committee or the Board or a reference/working Group, Board members or any working group, the Board may
  - (1) approve;
  - (2) make minor variations;
  - (3) reject, and ask relevant working group and/or proposers to reconsider, providing guidance and reasons for not approving the recommendation.
- ▶ The Board should not seek to repeat discussions that have taken place within sub-committees or working groups. To this end
  - papers should be circulated in advance;
  - questions of clarification should go to the ED or sub-committee members in advance where possible;
  - papers should provide background, and make specific recommendations.

Decision-making is by consensus where possible.

The Chair is empowered to move discussion on, ask for motions to be tabled, defer items for further consideration or to obtain additional or new information.
- ▶ Decision-making process
  - A recommendation or motion is put (in written form wherever possible);
  - Discussion of motion for an agreed period of time – board members are encouraged to be concise and speak to the issue only once wherever possible;
  - The Chair may ask each Board Member for a contribution and may encourage alternative positions or analysis to ensure the decision is given proper consideration;
  - Consensus is sought;
  - If consensus is not forthcoming, discuss how vital the issues of difference are;
  - If they are vital, clarify the disagreement and attempt to resolve;
  - Check for consensus again;
  - If no consensus, decide whether to proceed with a vote or defer the decision – perhaps to allow for wider consultation or the obtaining of additional information – as a general rule if 1/3 or more of the board are not satisfied with the discussion or proposed method to resolve the decision it would be appropriate to defer the decision for at least 1 meeting;
  - If the process proceeds to a vote, the motion must be minuted and board members may request that a record is kept of dissenting views and/or who abstained, where applicable.
  - If the vote is deadlocked the motion is lost.
  - The Chair has an ordinary vote, not a casting vote.
- ▶ From time to time Executive decisions made will need to be brought to the Board for ratification.
- ▶ A review of the progress of the Agenda will occur at the end of day one, so that any changes in flights can be made as early as possible.

## MINUTES

1. Draft Minutes of Board meetings will be circulated to the Chairperson and the Company Secretary within 5 working days and then to all other Board Members within 30 days.
2. A copy of approved Minutes are to be signed by the Chair and entered into the Board Minutes file, with the date of approval and entry to be recorded on the minutes register.

## USE OF ALTERNATES

1. If a Director is unable to participate in the activities of the FRSA Board for a period of time they may propose the appointment of an Alternate Director.
  - ▶ The appointment of an Alternate Director occurs under the ASIC Replaceable Rules (Section 81) which require that the resolution to appoint an alternate specify a timeframe and terms for the appointment, in addition ASIC must be notified within 14 days of the appointment.
  - ▶ The resolution to appoint an Alternate Director requires the approval of all other Directors. As a matter of protocol the approval of an Alternate Director is considered on a case-by-case basis and in extenuating circumstances rather than as a regular or frequent practice. Generally only absences of 6 weeks or more would warrant the approval of an appropriate alternate.

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## 1.3 FRSA BOARD COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

Board members email addresses will not be included in communication with other organisations. The secretariat will ensure that FRSA members have access to email addresses of Board members.

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## 1.4 DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY POLICY

### PURPOSE

This policy provides guidance on who has the authority to deal with a wide range of operational matters at FRSA.

### DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

#### Underlying principles

These delegations of authority and any agency (that is, the authorising of another person by a delegate to exercise his or her delegation) must always be read subject to and exercised consistently and in accordance with, any legislation, industrial award or agreement and FRSA policy, code of conduct, guidelines or procedures.

The following principles apply to a delegate's or an agent's level and scope of authority under any delegation of authority (whether it appears in this document or elsewhere):

- a) A delegation or an agency referred to in this document relates to the delegate's or agent's position, not to the individual in that position.
- b) A delegate or an agent may take any action or sign any document (subject to any protocols of FRSA about signing documents), necessary to give effect to a transaction he or she has authorized, under his or her delegation or agency.
- c) A delegate or an agent may only exercise authority with respect to a transaction as a whole, inclusive of GST. For the avoidance of any doubt, this also means that:

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<sup>1</sup> ASIC Replaceable Rules Section 8: **201K** With the other directors' approval, a director may appoint an alternate to exercise some or all of the director's powers for a specified period. The appointment and terms of appointment must be notified to ASIC (refer to s.205B)

- i) transactions cannot be divided into segments or parts;
- ii) the total gross cost (including GST) of the transaction applies – it cannot be set-off by any deductions, trade-ins or the like;
- iii) if there is any increase in the cost of a transaction (such as construction costs), then:
  - the delegate who approved the original transaction must approve that variation; or
  - that delegate may appoint an agent to approve any increases provided that the total number of any such increases does not exceed the lesser of:
    - 10% of the original cost of that transaction; or
    - the limit of that delegate's authority for that type of transaction; or
  - if the sum of the variation and the original cost of the transaction exceed the delegate's limit of authority for that type of transaction, a delegate with the appropriate level of authority must approve that variation.
- d) Delegates must not approve the incurring or the reimbursement of their own expenditure, even if it falls within their responsibility level – that expenditure must be approved by that person's supervisor;
- e) A delegate or an agent who is appointed to, or otherwise acts temporarily in a position, has the same level of delegation or agency as the substantive occupant.
- f) The delegation or the agency applies only to that delegate's or agent's accountability area (that is, the organisational unit, area or group of areas for which a delegate or an agent is responsible).

### **Expenditure Limits**

Any delegation or agency to incur expenditure must be exercised within the limits of the relevant approved budget, or other approved source of funds.

### **Authority of the Executive Director**

Delegates and agents are always subject to the direction and authority of the Executive Director. The Executive Director has the authority to exercise any delegation of authority specified in this document, except those delegated to a committee of the Board.

### **GENERAL FINANCIAL DELEGATIONS**

Authority to incur expenditure also includes authority to accept payments on behalf of FRSA (e.g., sponsorship from third parties) to the same limit, unless this document or any other policy or procedure specifies otherwise.

### **Funding Agreements**

All funding agreements are to be signed by the Executive Director

### **Budgets and other Revenue Sources**

These delegates have authority to allocate approved budgets and other revenue within their accountability areas:

- Deputy Director and
- Office Manager

### **Tenders**

The Executive Director will approve all tenders and grant applications for new activities prior to their lodgment.

### **Levels of Financial Authority**

These delegates have the authority to enter into transactions up to the values specified, except for gifts or other transactions specifically dealt with elsewhere in this document.

<b>Delegate</b>	<b>Limit</b>
Executive Director * for amounts adversely affecting the overall position of the approved operating budget for FRSA, or outside the approved capital budget for FRSA	Up to \$30,000
Executive Director for amounts within approved operating or capital budget for FRSA	No limit
Executive Director, Deputy Director and Office Manager for previously approved contractual/legally binding payments only, e.g., superannuation, payroll tax, income tax	No limit
Deputy Director and Office Manager for amounts within an approved operating budget	Up to \$10,000

### **Writing off Balance Sheet Items**

These delegates have the authority to write-off (a) goods; (b) obsolete, non-repairable or missing equipment; (c) service fees/charges; (d) account balances; (e) costs and d) bad debts.

<b>Delegate</b>	<b>Net Book Value Limit</b>
Executive Director	Up to \$3,000
Deputy Director and Office Manager	Up to \$1,000

### **Writing off Salary Overpayments**

These delegates have the authority to write off salary overpayments if these first cannot be recovered through legal action or other means:

<b>Delegate</b>	<b>Limit</b>
Executive Director	Up to \$2,000
Deputy Director or Office Manager *	Up to \$500

### **Accepting Gifts and Corporate Sponsorships**

The acceptance of gifts and corporate sponsorships must in no way compromise the integrity of the organisation. These delegates have the authority to approve the acceptance of gifts or corporate sponsorships (monetary or otherwise):

<b>Delegate</b>	<b>Limit</b>
Executive Director and Deputy Director	All gifts and corporate sponsorships

### **Fees and Charges for Services**

These delegates have the authority to determine, waive or approve full or partial refunds, except writing them off (see write-off above):

<b>Delegate</b>	<b>Limit</b>
Director	All fees and charges for services
Deputy Director and Office Manager	All fees and charges for services up to \$500

## Re-imbusement of Expenditure

The Chairperson of the Board will approve all legitimate re-imburements due to the Director.

The Executive Director, Deputy Director or Office Manager can approve re-imburements to staff consistent with policy or procedures or up to a total value of \$300 where no policy or procedure guidance is available.

## Banking and Cheque Signatories

The Executive Director has the authority to:

- designate categories of signatories; and
- approve authorised signatories for FRSA bank accounts; and
- approve all the arrangements with respect to FRSA's banking accounts (e.g., opening and closing or styles of accounts);

provided that a clear record of such authority is maintained and available to the Board.

### Cheques and electronic transfers

Authorized signatories:

- Executive Director,
- Deputy Director
- Office Manager
- Company Secretary
- Chairperson

These delegates have the authority to sign FRSA cheques and approve electronic transfers.

All cheque payments and electronic transfers require approval by two signatories.

## Investment of Funds

These delegates have the authority to:

Delegate	Limit
Board	Determines policy
Executive Director, Deputy Director, Office Manager	Deposits, withdraws, transfers funds

## PERSONNEL DELEGATIONS

### Personnel Policy

The Executive Director has the authority to approve personnel policies (including any changes to them) with respect to all staff and supported employees.

### Determining Disputes

The Executive Director has the authority to determine any unresolved issues or disputes in connection with personnel matters.

### Personnel Establishment

These delegates have the authority to approve the personnel establishment for the organisation and to authorise position descriptions.

<b>Delegate</b>	<b>Authority</b>
Board	Approve all proposals for the significant restructure to the organisation.
Executive Director*	Approve all changes to personnel establishment and all proposals for other than significant restructure to the organisation.
Deputy Director	Approve position descriptions in consultation with the relevant Executive Manager
	Approve the filling of vacant positions.

### **Remuneration**

The FRSA Board (or a sub-committee convened by the Board), will approve all significant reviews of salary and wage classification levels and packages on recommendation from the Executive Director. The Executive Director will approve all other adjustments to remuneration levels.

### **Selection and Appointment of Staff**

FRSA policies in regards to the selection of staff will guide the advertising and selection process of all employees.

### **Day to day Personnel Operations Matters**

These delegates have the authority to approve the following within their accountability areas and below their own designated levels.

<b>Delegate</b>	<b>Limit</b>
Executive Director	Secondment or exchange arrangements LWOP of more than one month Interstate and Overseas Travel
Deputy Director	Additional hours and LWOP of up to one month. In-State travel, mileage, accommodation, etc as per the approved budget Timesheets, time off in lieu (TOIL), Leave (A/L, LSL, sick, parental, jury, bereavement & other)

### **Staff Development Activities**

The Executive Director and the Deputy Director have the authority to approve general staff development activities for all staff and supported employees as per the annual budget.

### **Separations (other than poor performance)**

The Executive Director has the authority with respect to all aspects of separation as follows.

- Resignation, retirement and medical retirement (instigated by the employee)
- Redundancy (instigated by the employer)
- Termination for ill-health (instigated by the employer)

## Industrial Relations Matters

These delegates have the authority to approve the following within their accountability areas and below their own designated levels.

Delegate	Limit
Board	Approve industrial arrangements and agreements
Executive Director	Sign approved industrial agreements Represent the organisation at industrial hearings and tribunals
Deputy Director	Negotiate with the staff/supported employees and their representative union

## Workplace Health and Safety Matters

These delegates have the authority to deal with day-to-day Workplace Health and Safety matters.

Delegate	Limit
Executive Manager - Organisational Services *, Executive Manager - Finance and Procurement*	Witness the Worker's Compensation Claim Form (Form 2b) signed by the claimant Sign the Employer's Report Form (Form 1) Arrange treatment and referral to a preferred medical provider and to a rehabilitation provider
Director, Executive Managers, Assistant Managers *, Risk Management Officer *, Supervisors * or OSH Representative*	Sign Incident Hazard Reports Sign OSH Review Form

## Access to Staff Records

The Executive Director and the Deputy Director have the authority to approve requests to access staff records.

## Work References

FRSA does not provide written references. These delegates have the authority to provide verbal work references at the following levels.

Delegate	Limit
Chairperson of the Board*	Director
Executive Director	All staff
Deputy Director	All staff

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## 1.5 PLANNING

### PURPOSE

All decision-making within FRSA is undertaken within a planning context that links every-day operational matters to the goals and the future direction of the organisation.

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

FRSA develops a Strategic Plan every three years or more frequently if appropriate. The Strategic Plan establishes broad goals and objectives, including priorities and performance targets for FRSA.

The Strategic Plan is developed through a process of consultation with members, staff, government representatives and other stakeholders. The process is also informed from a range of sources including member and community feedback, performance review, research and contemporary practice in social policy and advocacy.

The Strategic Plan is provided to all members and is made available to other stakeholders and members of the public on request.

## **OPERATION OR BUSINESS PLANS**

Operation or Business Plans are developed each year to support the achievement of the Strategic Plan.

The operational plan drives the implementation of strategic objectives and typically includes actions to be taken, timeframes, responsibilities, resource allocations and data collection. The operational plan is linked to the annual budget ensuring that the budget reflects the goals and priorities of the strategic plan and also that planning is realistic in relation to available resources.

## **PLANNING REVIEW**

Progress against both the Strategic and Operational Plan is regularly reviewed through:

- ▶ Reports to the Board detailing achievements and performance measurement against organisation goals and operating plans;
- ▶ Reports to members detailing the achievement of strategic objectives related to public policy and sector development;
- ▶ Consultation with members, staff and stakeholders.

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## **1.6 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

### **PURPOSE**

Financial management is the control of the organisation's financial resources. This includes planning, authorising, tracking and reporting both income and expenditure.

Sound financial management policy enables FRSA to:

- ▶ Make effective use of its resources,
- ▶ Keep the organisation viable and sustainable over the long-term; and
- ▶ Ensure compliance with all legal requirements on the use of public funds including requirements governing fund-raising, taxation, accounting and service contracts.

### **ANNUAL BUDGET**

The Annual Budget is the primary system for planning income and expenditure and tracking the organisation's performance during the financial year.

The Chair of the Finance Committee and Executive Director will develop the Annual Budget based on the best available evidence of the likely income and costs that the organisation will have over the financial year and with reference to future directions such as those contained in the Strategic Plan.

The Board approves the Annual Budget and receives regular reports of income and expenditure against the budget throughout the year.

The Annual Budget will be reviewed during the financial year if overall income or overall expenditure is likely to vary by more than 20%.

## **ACCOUNTING SYSTEMS**

In accordance with the *Corporations Act 2001*, FRSA must keep sufficient financial records to record and explain all transactions and the overall financial position of the organisation and to allow true and fair financial statements to be prepared and audited. Audited statements must be provided to members at least annually.

## **RESPONSIBILITY FOR FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

The Board is responsible for the financial viability of FRSA and for ensuring that the organisation complies with reporting and accountability requirements. On a day-to-day basis the Executive Director is responsible for overseeing financial management systems, assessing financial performance and developing accurate reports for the Board.

There are three key areas of performance for which the Executive Director is responsible:

1. Income Generation;
2. Expenditure Control; and
3. Risk Management

Regular financial reports are provided to the Board, prepared under the oversight of the Finance Committee.

## **INCOME GENERATION**

FRSA generates income through the following mechanisms:

- ▶ Ongoing or 'core' funding contracts from government agencies;
- ▶ Time limited funding contracts from government and non-government agencies (eg project and research contracts);
- ▶ The development and sale of materials or resources (eg manuals, guides, training workshops);
- ▶ Fund-raising;
- ▶ Membership fees; and
- ▶ Sponsorship of activities or events (eg conferences, training workshops).

From time to time, staff and members may be asked to assist by identifying opportunities, responding to tender and grant advertisements and generating income through fund-raising or sponsorship.

The capacity to execute contracts on behalf of FRSA is limited to the Executive Director and the Chairperson. Contracts over \$30,000 in value require the approval of the Board.

## **EXPENDITURE CONTROL**

Expenditure is planned in the annual budget and monitored through regular reports against the budget. Employees are required to contribute to controlling expenditure in the following ways:

- ▶ Provide timely advice to the Executive Director regarding any unanticipated expenditure;
- ▶ Obtain price competitive quotes for major purchases or contract work;
- ▶ Make responsible use of the organisation's resources;
- ▶ Monitor program or project budgets when required; and
- ▶ Identify opportunities for making cost savings wherever possible.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

The Executive Director must ensure that FRSA takes appropriate measures to protect its resources and assets. This includes appropriate systems for securing and protecting assets, maintaining the value of assets, setting aside funds for the replacement of equipment, implementing safety procedures and ensuring that the organisation is appropriately insured.

The Board must be informed of any potential risk of unplanned financial loss being incurred. This may include unpaid or bad debts, unanticipated devaluation of assets or unanticipated increases or decreases in expenditure.

## **PROPOSALS WITH FINANCIAL IMPACT**

Proposals that may have a financial impact will be considered by the Finance Committee prior to presentation to the Board.

## **REPORTING**

Financial reports to the Board are provided under the direction of the Finance Committee in advance of each Board meeting. Unless varied, the following reports are provided:

- ▶ income and expenditure against the annual budget;
- ▶ profit/loss summary;
- ▶ balance sheet.

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## **1.7 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES**

### **CURRENT EXECUTIVE EXPENDITURE DELEGATIONS**

- ▶ The Executive Director can approve expenditures that are within 5% of the annual budget up to \$30,000 on any single occasion under delegation of the Board.
- ▶ Amounts higher than \$10,000 require co-signature or approval by a Board Member.
- ▶ The Executive Director can delegate expenditure approval to other staff up to a limit of \$5,000 on any single occasion.

### **CHEQUES AND PAYMENTS**

- ▶ All cheques and equivalent payment methods including online and telephone payments must be signed by two authorised persons.
- ▶ Cheques for routine expenditure within budget may be signed by two authorised persons within the staff team.
- ▶ Where there may be perceived conflict or misuse of authority – where payments are addressed to a member of staff, outside agreed budget expenditure or for amounts over \$3,000 - the signatories should include at least one authorised Board member.

### **EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT**

- ▶ To be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses FRSA Directors, employees and representatives must submit an invoice or complete a Reimbursement Form and attach receipts or tax invoices where required.
- ▶ Once the Director or his/her delegate signs off the form the payment will be processed.
- ▶ Payment can only be made if documentation is in order.
- ▶ Payment will only be made for costs agreed with the Executive Director or Chair of the Finance Committee prior to the cost being incurred.
- ▶ Unless otherwise specified, payment will be made by direct deposit or cheque.
- ▶ Petty Cash will only be given for amounts less than \$100.

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## 1.8 ASSET MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

All **FRSA** assets are to be recorded in the asset register at cost and items over \$1,000 in value also entered in the depreciation schedule and depreciated over their useful working lives. Assets purchased under \$1,000 in value are expensed against Furniture and Fittings or Equipment.

### SALE OF ASSETS:

New assets should be recorded at their actual cost. When an asset is sold the sale is recorded in the accounts at its sale value with the resulting profit or loss recorded.

### ASSET DEFINITION:

**ASSET = ANY SINGLE ITEM OVER \$1,000 IN VALUE.**

### DEPRECIATION RATES:

Depreciation rates will be applied to the assets of **FRSA** as follows:

ITEM	USEFUL	DEPRECIATION RATE
Computer Equipment	2 years	50%
Furniture and Fittings	7 years	15%
Leasehold Improvements	Life of Lease OR 25%, whichever is greater	25%
Software	Expensed on purchase	100%
Equipment	5 years	20%
Motor Vehicles	3 years or 30,000 kms	33%

These depreciation rates may be varied from time to time in accordance with accounting standards. Depreciation will be entered into the accounts via journal entries monthly.

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## 1.9 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

### PURPOSE

To ensure that conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest are identified in a timely way, with appropriate steps taken to address the conflict and protect the integrity of **FRSA**. The failure to declare and properly manage a conflict of interest has the potential to cause embarrassment to the organisation and jeopardise its credibility.

### DEFINITION OF TERMS

A conflict of interest is an actual or perceived interest by a member of the Board that results in or has the appearance of resulting in, personal gain or advantage to another organisation. This can include circumstances where the individual may not benefit directly but may be biased or appear to be biased in decision-making.

Examples of conflict of interest could be (but are not limited to):

- ▶ When a Board member or his/her immediate family or business interests stands to gain financially from any business dealings, programs or services of the organisation.
- ▶ When a Board member him or herself offers a professional service to the organisation.
- ▶ When a Board member stands to gain personally or professionally from any insider knowledge if that knowledge is used to personal advantage.

- ▶ Where a Board member or the ex/officio member of the Board has a role on the governing body of another organisation, where the activities of that other body may be in direct conflict or competition with the activities of that organisation.

## DECLARATION

Relevant interests in which a conflict may arise must be declared and documented in meetings where decisions are made or advice informing decisions is developed. This may include meetings of the Board, staff meetings and Reference or Advisory group meetings involving members. The minutes of the meeting will note the interest. A Declaration of Interest Form is also available to assist this process.

## PROCEDURE FOR MANAGING CONFLICTS

1. Members shall declare any relevant interest and complete a Declaration of Interest Form either at the start of the Board meeting concerned or when a relevant issue arises. The nature of these interests should be entered into the meeting minutes.
2. Where a conflict of interest or relevant interest is identified and/or registered, the Board member concerned shall not participate in decisions made on that issue and must remove themselves from any discussion on that issue (either in the meeting or with other Board members before or after the Board meetings) unless expressly invited to do so by unanimous agreement by all other members present.
3. If a person declares themselves to have existing or potential conflict of interest confidentiality will be respected.
4. If a person alleges that another person has a conflict of interest, whether existing or potential, and if the Board cannot resolve this allegation to the satisfaction of both parties, the matter shall be referred to the Ethics Sub-Committee. This Sub-Committee will make a recommendation to the Board as to what action shall be taken.

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## 1.10 RISK MANAGEMENT

### PURPOSE

The effective management of risk is important to maintaining a viable organisation and providing a safe environment for service users and staff. To be effective risk management needs to be embedded in organisation management and day-to-day operations as a responsibility shared by Board Members, management and employees.

### DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Risk** is the possibility that an expected result will not be achieved or that an unforeseen event might occur. It is usually measured in terms of consequences (what will happen) and probability (the chances of it happening). **Risk management** is a method of establishing context, identifying, analysing, evaluating, treating, monitoring and communicating risks. It is as much about identifying opportunities as avoiding losses or problems.

### STEPS IN RISK MANAGEMENT

The Board will require that the Executive Director, employees and/or external persons or agencies undertake risk management. This may occur across the organisation or within specific programs or areas of function, at any time. Individuals conducting or participating in risk management should be familiar with the six-steps (based on the Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 4360:1999) described in the table below.

STEPS	ACTIONS
1. Establish Context	Establish the risk assessment environment, clarify objectives and define the process.
2. Identify Risks	Identify as many risks as possible through an examination of all sources of risk and consideration of all areas of effect.
3. Analyse Risks	Analyse the risk with existing controls to determine the risk level, in consideration of the likelihood of the risk and the consequences of the risk.
4. Assess & Prioritise Risks	Determine those risks that are acceptable and those that require treatment.
5. Treat Risks	For risks that require treatment, strategies or actions may be developed, including preventative controls that reduce the likelihood of the risk, and corrective controls that mitigate the full impact of the consequence
6. Monitor and Review	Maintain the accuracy and the relevance of the process.

## INFORMING THE BOARD

The Executive Director and the Board must be informed, as soon as possible, if the organisation is at risk of unplanned financial loss such as unanticipated expenses, bad debts or damage to assets. The Executive Director and the Board must also be informed when serious risks are identified through the review of complaints, accidents and/or safety inspections.

## 1.11 PARTNERSHIPS WITH MEMBER AGENCIES

### PURPOSE

In accordance with Item 3(e) of the Constitution of FRSA, it is an Object of the organisation to facilitate sector development and the interests of members. From time to time opportunity may arise for FRSA to engage in partnership projects with member agencies. This policy guides any such involvement.

### DETERMINATION OF INVOLVEMENT

- ▶ A Business Case for any project with members shall be put to the Board of Directors prior to any commencement of activities or commitment of resources by FRSA.
- ▶ The Business case must identify:
  - the scope of the project,
  - the benefit to FRSA,
  - the direct or indirect benefit to the membership as a whole,
  - the resource implications for FRSA,
  - any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest at a Board or membership level or at an organisational level,
  - the manner in which the project aligns with current strategic and operational goals or objectives.
- ▶ In order to be acceptable as a project there must be an identified benefit that either directly or indirectly supports, enhances or furthers the work of the membership of FRSA as a whole.
- ▶ The project must not provide commercial or reputational benefit to a particular agency, member or group of members.
- ▶ The project should not be seeking to produce a product, service, or reputation that places FRSA in competition with its members, potentially or in actuality.
- ▶ FRSA shall ensure that the purpose of the project meets the current strategic and operational priorities for the organisation.

- ▶ The project must have objectives that enhance the reputation and standing of FRSA and advance the interests of the sector.
- ▶ FRSA shall not involve itself in a way that provides any competitive advantage to one member or group of members over any other member or members.

## **ONGOING PROJECT**

- ▶ At least two (2) members of the Board of FRSA, not associated with the member agencies involved in the project, shall represent the interests of FRSA in the project and provide direct reports back to the Board of FRSA.
- ▶ Any Director involved with a member agency proposed or actually involved in the project shall remove themselves from any and all discussions and decisions in regards to the project.
- ▶ FRSA shall retain its intellectual and reputational property, on behalf of the entire membership, as a condition of its involvement in any project.
- ▶ There must be open disclosure with all members of FRSA as to the nature of the partnership and project, through whatever means that the Directors deem most appropriate.
- ▶ An opportunity must be given for members to comment on the partnership and provide feedback for the Board to consider its ongoing involvement in the partnership.
- ▶ Any intellectual property, product development, or other derived benefits from the project must be available to members of FRSA.
- ▶ The involvement of FRSA in any partnership projects should not cause a breach or inconsistency with any existing Policy of FRSA at that time. As far as is possible the partnership should adopt the approaches taken in FRSA's Projects Policy, Representation Policy, etc.

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## **1.12 ORGANISATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

### **PURPOSE**

Policies guide practice within FRSA and have a number of functions:

- ▶ Provide practical guidelines for the Board, management and staff;
- ▶ Help a group or individual to make decisions in a consistent way;
- ▶ Save time in considering various options each time they arise by allowing for complex decisions to be made and provide boundaries for future decisions;
- ▶ Provide staff, members and other stakeholders with a clear indication of what they can expect from the organisation and what will be expected of them.

Policies may be supported by procedures which describe how a group puts policies into action. They are the processes and methods that the organisation has chosen to use. They detail how and when things are done and who has responsibility for them. Procedures are important for making sure that things occur consistently.

### **DEVELOPING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

When developing policies and procedures FRSA considers the following:

- ▶ Why the policy is needed and what situations it needs to cover?
- ▶ Who will be affected by the policy and/or procedure?
- ▶ What process is most appropriate for the development of the content of the policy/procedure?
- ▶ What philosophies or principles need to be considered?
- ▶ What are the legal or other requirements that need to be taken into account?
- ▶ How will the policy work and how will it be implemented?

FRSA will work to ensure that those affected by the policy and procedure are involved in its development and endorsement. FRSA may also seek specialist or legal advice in relation to new or reviewed policies.

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURE REVIEW**

The review of policies and procedures is incorporated in organisation planning in a way that ensures all policies and procedures are reviewed at least every two years. Policies and procedures are reviewed when legislation or funding agreements change and in response to significant issues such as major complaints or the identification of potential undue risk to individuals, groups or the organisation.

When reviewing policies and procedures, FRSA will consider:

- ▶ Is the policy clear and understandable?
- ▶ Do policies assist staff to perform their duties?
- ▶ Has there been any feedback about the policies and procedures which might affect their review?



## 2 EFFECTIVE REPRESENTATION POLICIES

### 2.1 MEMBERSHIP

#### PURPOSE

FRSA delivers tangible benefits to members who have the opportunity to be actively engaged in FRSA activities. The relationship between FRSA and its members is based on open communication, mutual respect and understanding.

#### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND APPROVAL

FRSA currently has two membership categories:

- ▶ **Full membership** is open to organisations receiving funding through the Australian Government's Family Relationship Services Program (FRSP) – or its successors;
- ▶ **Associate Membership** is available to organisations and individuals with an interest in the work of FRSA.

The directors may create additional classes of members, and determine the rights and privileges attaching to those classes including, but not limited to, the voting rights of members in each class.

The Executive Director is authorised by the Board to approve membership applications to be ratified at next meeting of the Board.

#### MEMBERSHIP FEES

Membership fees are set by the Board and can be reviewed annually. The Board has discretion to waive or defer the payment of membership fees when applicants or renewing members are experiencing financial hardship.

#### MEMBERSHIP RIGHTS AND BENEFITS

Membership rights are specified in the FRSA Constitution. Broadly, full members of FRSA have the right to:

- ▶ Vote in Board elections;
- ▶ Stand for election to the Board;
- ▶ Attend and vote at General Meetings (including the Annual General Meeting);
- ▶ Receive a copy of the Audited Financial Report and FRSA Annual Report.

The rights of member organisations are exercised by a nominated delegate.

FRSA members also receive the following benefits:

- ▶ Regular newsletters and updates regarding issues of relevance or interest;
- ▶ Opportunities to participate in networking and learning events;
- ▶ Opportunities to influence the development of the FRSA Strategic Plan and participate in FRSA activities including the development of public policy statements; and
- ▶ Discounts on FRSA publications and events.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The FRSA membership database is not made available or sold to third parties (including member organisations) for any purpose unless permission has been granted by each member through a documented process. However, the membership database may be used to distribute information from third parties (eg event announcements, promotional material), where such information is considered of significant interest to members and/or members have agreed to receive information pertaining to specific topics.

Organisation members may elect to be included on an on-line database that provides basic contact details to anyone who visits the FRSA web site. Alternatively they may elect to have their details kept confidential.

## **SATISFACTION AND FEEDBACK**

FRSA uses a range of mechanisms to elicit feedback from members and to assess member satisfaction. These include:

- ▶ Member satisfaction surveys;
- ▶ Monitoring membership levels and pro-actively seeking feedback from members that choose not to renew their membership;
- ▶ Evaluation of activities and events provided to members; and
- ▶ Review of feedback and complaints received from members.

Members are encouraged to provide feedback at any time by contact with any member of staff or the Board.

## **RESPECT AND UNDERSTANDING**

FRSA endeavours to ensure that it operated with a clear mandate from members. Members are invited to be actively involved in all major activities including setting strategic directions and goals, developing public policy statements, undertaking advocacy and representation and sector development activities. Mechanisms used to keep members up-to-date with the organisations work include regular newsletters, bulletins, web-site, correspondence and access to FRSA staff.

Members are asked to recognise that there will be diversity in the membership with regard to some issues and that sometimes the position of FRSA will be at odds with the views of some members. FRSA works to provide a balanced representation of membership views but must sometimes demonstrate leadership and take a direction that it believes to be the most appropriate. As a general rule FRSA will prioritise the needs and interests of people considered to be at greatest risk and in circumstances where there is any conflict of interest. FRSA will put the needs of client or target groups above that of organisations providing services. Members are welcome to identify points of difference with FRSA and to participate in discussions with the organisation and other members to resolve any conflicts.

There is an expectation that members will raise issues with FRSA before making any public criticism of the organisation.

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## **2.2 COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK**

### **PURPOSE**

Feedback and complaints are equally valuable to the evaluation of FRSA's performance and operations. Both feedback and complaints are documented and reviewed by staff, management and the Board (subject to confidentiality restrictions on complaints). This can be used to identify areas of strength and weakness and to inform changes in policy and practice.

## **FEEDBACK**

FRSA regularly solicits feedback from members and other stakeholders with regard to its performance. Formal mechanisms include:

- ▶ Participant evaluation processes built into programs and projects;
- ▶ Member satisfaction surveys; and
- ▶ Meetings with stakeholder groups.

In addition, FRSA endeavours to ensure that both staff and managers are accessible to people seeking to provide feedback on any of FRSA's activities.

Feedback is regularly discussed with individuals and the broader staff team during supervision meetings, team meetings and ad hoc opportunities. FRSA has a commitment to celebrating achievements and valuing positive feedback as well as considering learning opportunities that may result from any criticism or suggestions for improvement.

## **COMPLAINTS**

FRSA aims to always operate in a consultative way that acknowledges and takes account of diversity of interests, opinions and needs. Nonetheless, there may be times when an individual or agency is dissatisfied with decisions or actions taken by FRSA and/or its agents.

## **PROCEDURE**

Complaints may be made in writing, in person or by telephone contact or other forms of communication, to any member of the management team.

Complaints will be recorded and entered into the complaints register (this may be done anonymously at the complainant's request).

A timeframe for responding to the complaint will be agreed with the complainant – appropriate to the seriousness and urgency of the matter. This timeframe may vary from 24 hrs to 1 week.

The Executive Director will be informed of the complaint and determine an appropriate strategy for investigating and responding to the complaint - if the complaint relates to an action of the Executive Director the Chairperson is to be informed.

A response to the complaint is to be prepared and provided to the complainant, if the matter remains unresolved to the satisfaction of both parties the matter may be escalated to the Board or an external complaints mechanism.

Implications for improving practice within FRSA will be considered and an annual review of the Complaints Register will be conducted.

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## **2.3 COMMUNICATIONS**

### **PURPOSE**

All FRSA communications promote strong and health family relationships with particular emphasis on the importance of family relationships in nurturing children. All communications present a positive and respectful portrayal of all people, particularly vulnerable and marginalised groups.

### **ACCESSIBILITY**

FRSA works to ensure that all communication is accessible to the diversity of interest groups across the community that may want to support and understand its work. For example:

- ▶ Written documents use plain English and are culturally sensitive in relation to the use of language, terminology and expressions.

- ▶ Venues for consultation activities are accessible to people with mobility impairment and people using public transport.
- ▶ When undertaking public consultation - assistive technology is available to assist people with specific communication needs, including TTY capacity and braille translations on request and documents/publications are made available in languages other than English, wherever possible.
- ▶ An appropriate translating or interpreting service is used to assist communication with people for whom English is a second language, where appropriate.
- ▶ Meetings and events are arranged at convenient times to maximise opportunities for people with family and carer responsibilities and work commitments are able to attend.
- ▶ Professional presentation of documents with consistency in style and format to foster positive recognition and engagement in FRSA's work.

## **PUBLIC SPEAKING**

FRSA may frequently be invited to provide public speakers to:

- ▶ Discuss the organisation and its work;
- ▶ Discuss issues that FRSA is active on (eg separation or family mediation);
- ▶ Comment on social policy issues;
- ▶ Comment on government policy.

Unless specifically nominated by the Board or a delegation given by either the Chairperson or the Executive Director, the only two official spokespersons for FRSA are the Chairperson and the Executive Director.

## **MEDIA CONTACT**

Contact with the media is recognised as an important and sensitive function that must be appropriately managed. Contact may be initiated to make an official comment or release, provide information or raise awareness.

All planned communication to the media must be in accordance with approved policy statements. Where possible formal release of material to the media should have Board endorsement and be clearly identifiable as an FRSA statement (ie carry the letterhead or logo). However, the Board delegates to the Chairperson and/or Executive Director this function where the situation that endorsement by the full Board is impractical and the release is in line with FRSA policy statements and principles.

Copies of all media releases and a report on contact with the media are provided at each Board meeting.

## **DELEGATES AND NOMINEES**

FRSA may be asked to send representatives or recommend appointments to various public policy development or advisory forums. Examples include:

- ▶ FRSA appoints a delegate to represent member interests on an advisory body such as a taskforce, sub-committee, working group etc that is being convened by a government or non-government agency.
- ▶ FRSA recommends the appointment of an individual to an advisory or decision making body where appointments are made by Ministers, Government or Public Officials.

There is a need to ensure that any representative or submission is formally endorsed and accountable to the Board. The responsibilities of FRSA representatives must be clearly defined upon appointment. These may include:

- ▶ Maintaining records of proceedings;
- ▶ Consulting with FRSA in relation to any significant policy decisions;

- ▶ Providing verbal or written reports to FRSA;
- ▶ Keeping FRSA up-to-date with progress and/or issues.

**Guidelines for FRSA Representatives** have been developed to be tailored to each formal representative appointment – see appendix.

To assist delegates and representatives, FRSA will seek to provide timely advice on any matters arising, including urgent decisions or new initiatives. This may include undertaking research or policy analysis, providing clear statements on policy developments (subject to the approval of the Board), conducting consultations with members or external consultations.

## 2.4 SOCIAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT

### PURPOSE

FRSA develops high quality social policy positions and advice relevant to the provision of family relationship services.

### BEST AVAILABLE KNOWLEDGE

In developing social policy and positions FRSA will endeavour to access the best available knowledge on the topic or topics through reference to research, expertise and the views of affected communities and practitioners. Where there is conflicting evidence or opinion, FRSA will attempt to treat alternative views with fairness.

### SETTING PRIORITIES

The Board and Executive Director determine policy priorities with regard to:

- ▶ Issues and information raised or provided by members;
- ▶ Briefings and reports commissioned by Government or other parties pertaining to policy developments, research and consultation;
- ▶ Independent advice from experts in the field, when required; and
- ▶ Research publications and resources.

### CONSULTATION MECHANISMS

The Board may establish, from time to time, a variety of consultative mechanisms to inform the social policy development work of FRSA. Mechanisms may include:

- ▶ The establishment of working or reference groups;
- ▶ Circulation and feedback opportunities;
- ▶ Consultation activities such as surveys, forums or workshops.

### WORKING OR REFERENCE GROUP OPERATIONS

Working or Reference Groups report to the FRSA Board against agreed terms of reference.

Working and Reference Group members are expected to:

- ▶ Demonstrate a commitment to the objectives and goals of FRSA;
- ▶ Bring knowledge or experience relevant to the work of FRSA;
- ▶ Be willing to participate in activities such as meetings or teleconferences;
- ▶ Read, comment on and contribute to working papers and proposals;
- ▶ Be available for consultation and decision-making between meetings when required;
- ▶ Work cooperatively with other members, paid and unpaid workers;
- ▶ Support FRSA Board decisions and policy positions once they have been made; and

- ▶ Protect the reputation and effectiveness of FRSA as far as possible.

Working and Reference Group members have the right to:

- ▶ Gain satisfaction from their involvement in FRSA;
- ▶ Be supported by fellow members;
- ▶ Be respected by paid workers, Board members and others involved in the organisation;
- ▶ Receive adequate information and a clear description of specific responsibilities;
- ▶ Have clearly defined channels of responsibility and accountability; and
- ▶ Receive reimbursement for prior agreed costs such as travel, childcare, training etc.

## **PARTICIPANTS IN CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES**

Participants in consultation activities have the right to:

- ▶ Be fully informed of the purpose of the consultation and how the data collected will be used;
- ▶ Have their privacy respected and not disclosed without consent;
- ▶ Be acknowledged in reports or submissions - where a significant contribution has been made and consent given; and
- ▶ Access the results of the consultation activity when concluded (eg summary of discussion or survey outcomes).

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## **2.5 PROJECTS POLICY**

### **PURPOSE**

FRSA conducts a broad range of projects each year. Projects may be short-term or long term, may occur within a context of broader FRSA activity or may be stand-alone activities. Some projects are purchased by government; others may be funded by FRSA or stakeholder groups.

### **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

Ideas for projects and innovation are encouraged amongst members and staff. Prior to the development of project proposals the following tests may be applied:

- ▶ Is the project consistent with the Strategic Plan and current organisation priorities?
- ▶ Is the project feasible – given capacity to conduct and manage the activities required?
- ▶ Is there internal and external support for the project?

For those projects that successfully pass these tests there may be a planned approach to securing or allocating funds (note: Board approval is required for the allocation of resources outside of budgeted expenditure).

Project planning includes detailed consideration of the project design, methodology, staffing, resource needs, timelines and approaches to evaluation. Sufficient lead-time should be allowed for raising funds, building support and promoting the project, recruiting the project team and establishing management processes.

### **PROJECT METHODOLOGY**

Projects undertaken by FRSA shall be implemented cooperatively with key stakeholder groups by the application of methodology that recognises and values the expertise of stakeholders.

Stakeholders may include service providers, people who use services, people with an interest in the provision of services (eg monitoring agencies), community leaders and representatives, members of the project team and technical advisors (eg steering committee or reference group).

The methodology is based on the following considerations:

- ▶ Our analysis of the requirements of the project.
- ▶ Our understanding of the characteristics, likely needs and preferences of the sector.
- ▶ Our assessment of the most constructive, outcomes and time effective ways of achieving the project objective.

The methodology provides flexibility, within a framework which ensures the project objectives are met. It values and involves those responsible for, and with a stake in, the service system and its improvement, working with and being facilitated by the project officer to achieve the project objectives.

The methodology combines participatory action learning with elements of contemporary change management theory. 'Learning' is used here to encompass facilitated participatory and systemic reflection, critical assessment and assignment of value, participatory identification and evaluation of options for service development and reform in the provision of funded services. Key features include:

- ▶ The wisdom of stakeholders including practitioners and services users, gained through direct experience is valued.
- ▶ The expertise of providers about their own work environment and its strengths and limitations is recognised and utilised.
- ▶ It has the capacity to harness the commitment of stakeholders and enhance their investment in the development, evaluation and implementation of possible improvements.
- ▶ It promotes collaboration, partnership and the transfer of skills through shared experience.
- ▶ The focus is on long-term achievement, the longevity of the project outcomes and laying the foundation for continuous improvement.

## **BUILDING EFFECTIVE PROJECT TEAMS**

As far as possible FRSA will seek to ensure that all project teams have the appropriate skills mix and that individuals have clear roles and responsibilities. Staff, volunteers and participants in FRSA projects will be appropriately supported by the organisation, in accordance with the demands of the work and the skills and capacity that they bring to it.

## **PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

Projects undertaken by FRSA are executed in an effective and professional way, meet the respective needs of stakeholders and enhance the organisations achievements. Regular assessment of progress must be provided to the Executive Director, including:

- ▶ Up-to-date progress on project activities and milestones;
- ▶ Development of agreed outputs;
- ▶ Performance against agreed performance measures;
- ▶ Evaluation results; and
- ▶ Issues arising, including risk management.

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## **2.6 QUALITY ASSURANCE**

### **PURPOSE**

FRSA is committed to providing quality services to members and other stakeholders. FRSA practices continuous quality improvement through:

- ▶ Staff and volunteers being open to and encouraged to initiate new ways of doing things;
- ▶ Staff being encouraged to accept responsibility for quality and learning in the work of the organisation, through training, supervision and performance appraisal;

- ▶ Feedback being actively and regularly sought from stakeholders and observers with regard to the agency's performance; and
- ▶ Structuring our approach to managing risks that could jeopardise service quality or continuity.

FRSA also supports the development and implementation of quality systems in the family relationship services program (FRSP) through sector development and policy development.

## **USING RESEARCH**

FRSA seeks to keep abreast of research relevant to the organisation's work. There is scope for this knowledge to influence practice within our work. Mechanisms for this include:

- ▶ Subscriptions to relevant journals and publication series, within budget allocations;
- ▶ Opportunities for staff to attend conferences, seminars and training;
- ▶ Encouragement for staff to participate in learning forums; including higher education and training; and
- ▶ Networking with other organisations including national peak bodies and networks.

## **CONDUCTING RESEARCH**

FRSA also undertakes research projects to increase understanding in areas of service delivery. Research and project methodology must be approved by the Executive Director and where appropriate the Board or an appointed or nominated Ethics Reference Group.

When undertaking research, FRSA will ensure that:

- ▶ Staff undertaking research are appropriately qualified and experienced;
- ▶ Ethical issues are considered in the development of project design, with reference to professional standards and guidelines that may apply (eg standards relating to social research, psychology or social work practice and/or the National Privacy Principles);
- ▶ Data is collected in a manner that ensures reliability, validity and timeliness of reporting;
- ▶ Research outcomes are shared across the organisation and with the agencies and/or community members who participated; and
- ▶ Research methods aim to facilitate participation and influence in decision-making by people and communities who might otherwise be disadvantaged or excluded from the development and implementation of policy and practice.

Opportunities for partnerships with other organisations including research institutes and universities are regularly considered and nurtured.

## **EVALUATION**

Programs and projects undertaken by FRSA are routinely evaluated, which promotes participation by all relevant stakeholders. Evaluation activities are factored into staff work programs and project budgets. These activities usually include:

- ▶ Eliciting feedback from participants (eg research participants, training participants, people attending consultation forums);
- ▶ Review of program or project implementation by staff or contractors;
- ▶ Feedback on outputs such as reports or discussion papers from key stakeholders.
- ▶ The results of evaluation activities are shared with participants and other stakeholders including funding bodies by inclusion in reports and publicity on FRSA's activities.

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## 2.7 RELATIONSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS

### PURPOSE

FRSA works cooperatively with other organisations and groups, including both government and non-government agencies. FRSA is respectful and professional in all dealings with external agencies.

### RELATIONSHIPS

Directors and staff actively participate in planning, policy and consultation processes involving other community and government agencies. This includes participating in interagency groups, committees and forums to work on issues of common concern.

Positive working relationships are developed and maintained with people working in government agencies in order to encourage an open approach to the development of policies and program administration.

### PARTNERSHIPS

FRSA forms partnerships and coalitions with other organisations, where there is a mutual benefit and the opportunity to enhance the achievement of its goals.

Each partnership is based on:

- ▶ Mutual respect and the recognition of shared goals or interests;
- ▶ Opportunities for consultation, the exchange of perspective's and sharing resources;
- ▶ Clear roles, including an understanding of the boundaries on representation; and
- ▶ Understanding in relation to points of agreement and diversity.

Partnerships with other organisations are subject to review and assessment by FRSA and its members.

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## 2.8 CONSULTATION THROUGH POLICY ADVISERS

### RATIONALE

It is the role of FRSA to respond to issues relevant to family relationship services as they arise and to provide information or advice to interested parties on request. This may include (but is not limited to) Australian Government agencies, Members of Parliament (and their advisers), media outlets, other national networks and stakeholder groups. In some circumstances the issues are new or evolving and the timeframe for responding does not allow for broad consultation across the sector. In such circumstances it is important for the FRSA secretariat to have established mechanisms for tapping into the expertise of the sector quickly through contact with individuals identified as having appropriate knowledge and understanding.

To provide this support to the secretariat the FRSA Board may invite individuals to act as Policy Advisers on specific topics.

### PRINCIPLES

5. Policy Advisers will generally be persons of high standing in the sector with a depth of knowledge in one or more specific areas of policy or program delivery.
- ▶ Policy Advisers are appointed as individuals with expertise and skills in specific areas; they are not expected to represent a group of practitioners or providers.
  - ▶ The time commitment required of a Policy Adviser will usually be minimal but may vary if significant attention is given to a specific issue at any given time; there is no expectation that Policy Advisers will always be available or willing to assist FRSA.

- ▶ There may be times when it is inappropriate for FRSA to contact a Policy Adviser because of a potential conflict of interest or because broader consultation has or will be undertaken.
- ▶ Policy Advisers are not authorised to speak on behalf of FRSA or its members without approval from the Chairperson or Executive Director.
- ▶ With their consent, Policy Advisers may be acknowledged or quoted in position statements, media releases or policy documents produced by FRSA.
- ▶ Policy Advisers serve FRSA in a voluntary capacity but may be eligible for reimbursement of out of pocket expenses where appropriate.
- ▶ FRSA will evaluate the role of Policy Advisers periodically to determine if it is an effective consultation mechanism.

### **Practice Guide**

- ▶ FRSA member organisations may be invited to nominate for Policy Adviser roles or may be directly approached at the discretion of the Board – there may be times when the process needs to happen quickly.
- ▶ Policy Advisers will be provided with the option to provide confidential advice or to be acknowledged for their contribution on a case-by-case basis.
- ▶ Feedback on the outcome of discussions held with Policy Advisers will be provided within an agreed timeframe.

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## **2.9 PROTOCOLS FOR CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES**

### **RATIONALE**

Within resource capacities FRSA will regularly undertake consultation with member organisations and other stakeholders to inform its activities. Consultation may be undertaken to assist the development of social policy positions, identify priority issues affecting the delivery of family relationship services and elicit feedback on the member services provided by FRSA.

FRSA seeks to ensure that consultation is effective and makes the best use of the time invested by participants.

### **PRINCIPLES**

1. Consultation will be undertaken as early in the process of making decisions or developing positions on issues of social policy and service delivery as time and resource constraints allow.
2. Consultation will be widely based to ensure it captures the diversity of stakeholders with an interest in the issue.
3. Stakeholders invited to participate in consultation will be given sufficient time to provide considered responses.
4. Stakeholder groups will be provided with information about consultation opportunities via a range of means appropriate to those groups.
5. FRSA will clearly state the objectives of the consultation process and any parameters or limitations within which consultations take place.
6. Participants in consultation activities will be informed as to whether the input they provide is to be treated confidentially or acknowledged publicly, as appropriate to the circumstances.
7. Feedback on the results of the consultation and how FRSA has taken consultation responses into consideration in making decisions or forming positions will be provided to participants.
8. Where there is a lack of consensus or diversity of feedback gathered through consultation, genuine effort will be made to represent this accurately in reporting the results of the consultation.

9. FRSA will evaluate consultation processes and continue to examine ways of making them more effective.
10. FRSA Members have the right to dissent from the policy position adopted by FRSA.

## **PRACTICE GUIDES**

- ▶ Wherever possible opportunities to participate in consultation activities will be promoted through both electronic and written communication, targeting relevant stakeholders.
- ▶ As a general rule, written or online surveys will be 'in the field' for 2-4 weeks, notice of consultation events will occur 4 weeks in advance and as much time as possible will be given for members to comment on draft documents.
- ▶ Feedback on the results of consultation activities will be provided to participants within a reasonable timeframe – not more than 3 months after the conclusion of the activity.

## 3 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICIES

### 3.1 RECRUITMENT

#### PURPOSE

To maximise the extent to which FRSA can be sure that new employees have the skills, attributes and experience needed for their position (or the support and training to develop these skills). This will, in turn, maximise the extent to which individual appointments provide positive employment opportunities for individuals and strengthen the team as a whole.

Candidates for advertised positions will be required to submit a written application, attend an interview and provide referee contacts. Police checks may also be conducted prior to appointment.

#### EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Equal Employment Opportunity exists where discrimination in employment on the grounds of age, race, nationality, sexual preference, pregnancy, marital status, religion, political affiliation, or employment status has been eliminated.

FRSA's objectives for implementing EEO include:

- ▶ Support and promote diversity in the work force;
- ▶ Create a more responsive and culturally sensitive organisation;
- ▶ Help to eliminate discrimination and social forms of disadvantage; and
- ▶ Demonstrate our commitment to social justice.

The Board and the Executive Director of FRSA are wholly committed to the principles of equal employment opportunity and will promote these principles in both employment and service delivery policies and practices within the workplace. All persons working on behalf of FRSA are expected to take responsibility for fair, non discriminatory behaviour. All discriminatory behaviour is undesirable, may be unlawful and cannot be tolerated.

#### WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

FRSA seeks to build and maintain a diverse workforce that represents the community and a balance of perspective's and experiences. In particular, FRSA will seek to actively support and encourage the engagement and promotion of people who have historically been disadvantaged in the workforce. This includes (but is not limited to) the following identified target groups: women, people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people with a disability.

#### ANTI DISCRIMINATION

FRSA strives to take all reasonable steps to prevent discrimination and harassment in the workplace. This includes actively implementing precautionary measures to minimise the risk of discrimination and harassment occurring.

FRSA prohibits employees, volunteers, contractors or representatives engaging in any behaviour that constitutes discrimination or harassment of others on the basis of: race; sex; marital status; impairment; age; sexuality or transexuality; pregnancy; breastfeeding; status as a parent or carer; religious or political conviction; membership or non-membership of an association or organisation; profession, trade, occupation or calling.

Discriminatory behaviour refers to treating people less favourably on the basis of one or more attributes (direct discrimination) or treating everyone the same in a way that ends up being unfair to people who have any of the attributes listed above (indirect discrimination). This can be in relation to employment opportunities, opportunities for career development or promotion or day-to-day work practices. It can also be in relation to providing FRSA member services, access to premises or participation in events hosted by the organisation.

## **POSITION DESCRIPTION AND SELECTION CRITERIA**

All advertised employment vacancies must have a position description and selection criterion. Comparable but alternative information may be developed for volunteer or contractor vacancies.

All potential applicants who inquire about an advertised position will be provided with the following information:

- ▶ The position description for the position;
- ▶ The selection criteria to be used in determining selection;
- ▶ Where and how to find out more about the organisation (eg through the website, Annual Report etc).

## **INTERVIEWS AND SELECTION**

A selection panel will be appointed to review applications for permanent positions and conduct any interviews. The panel will generally consist of 2-3 people and may include:

- ▶ The Executive Director or person to whom the position will report;
- ▶ A member of the Board or an external person with relevant skills, representative capacity and adequate independence;
- ▶ A staff or peer representative.

## **NOTIFICATION AND FEEDBACK**

All applicants for vacant positions shall be advised of the outcome in writing and/or by telephone.

Unsuccessful candidates shall have the opportunity to be informed of the reasons for their lack of success if they so request, although any decision by FRSA on employment matters is final.

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## **3.2 EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS**

### **CONTRACTS AND PAY RATES**

Upon appointment all employees receive a letter of offer, job description and employment contract. Employees may be invited to negotiate elements of the contract such as remuneration and entitlements.

FRSA determines employee pay rates based on the consideration of a number of factors, including:

- ▶ Relevant awards rates and conditions;
- ▶ Rates paid by the Commonwealth and ACT Government for comparable duties;
- ▶ The ability to offer non-financial rewards such as flexible leave provisions; and
- ▶ The extent to which the organisation and its staff can legally and appropriately enter into salary sacrificing arrangements.

## **SALARY SACRIFICING**

FRSA may offer employees the opportunity to enter into a salary packaging arrangement when:

- ▶ There is no loss to either the employee or the organisation;
- ▶ Employees enter the arrangement on a purely voluntary basis;
- ▶ The employee member has expenses which can lawfully be packaged without excessive administrative burden on the organisation;
- ▶ When negotiating a salary package, superannuation, workers compensation and leave loading are all calculated at the total package value.

## **WORKING HOURS**

FRSA is committed to the wellbeing of employees and encourages all employees to achieve work/life balance. Employees are discouraged from working longer hours than necessary and expected to manage their workload within the hours of employment specified in their employment contract. Any difficulties should be raised with the Executive Director.

Employees can work flexible hours when practicable and may work from home on occasion, subject to the agreement of the Executive Director. Employees are to manage their working hours to ensure that they are not working excessive hours on any given day and that they work no more than 5 hours consecutively without a meal break of at least 30 minutes.

## **OVERTIME AND TIME IN LIEU**

Unless the employee's individual employment contract specifically states otherwise, FRSA will compensate staff for authorised work performed in excess of their normal working hours. This compensation can be made as an overtime payment or time off can be granted in lieu of an overtime payment. Whether paid or accrued as time in lieu, all overtime must be approved by the Executive Director in advance and recorded on the employee's timesheet. An agreed timeframe for taking time in lieu will be negotiated at the time approval is granted. Where possible, time in lieu will be taken within 3 months and no more than 5 working days is to be accrued at any given time.

## **PAYROLL PROCEDURES**

- ▶ Employees are paid fortnightly by direct funds transfer to a nominated bank account held by the employee.
- ▶ Employees may be required to record their time by completing a fortnightly timesheet detailing the hours they have worked on a daily basis. Additional documentation outlining tasks and achievements may also be required, subject to the requirements of the supervisor and/or the Executive Director.
- ▶ Employees are provided with a pay slip detailing the date of payment, period covered by payment, hours worked, all deductions, superannuation contributions, gross pay, amount actually paid and how the amount is made up.
- ▶ Employees are provided with a regular update regarding their entitlements in relation to annual leave, long service leave, sick leave etc.

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## **3.3 HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **PURPOSE**

FRSA is committed to ensuring a safe and healthy working environment for everyone - a "zero accident" target is desirable.

## **REGULAR REVIEW OF HEALTH AND SAFETY**

A periodic review of safety in the work environment will also be undertaken, including an inspection of all work areas, common rooms and storage areas.

Annually a review of safety practices will be undertaken. This will include a review of records of injuries, accidents or 'near misses' during the year. Specialist advice might be sought to address specific risks identified in the work place.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF EMPLOYEES**

All employees are expected to take reasonably practicable steps to:

- ▶ use safe work practices and procedures;
- ▶ use appropriate safety devices, safeguards and equipment provided;
- ▶ co-operate in all activities aimed at prevention of workplace accidents, injuries and illnesses;
- ▶ report unsafe or defective equipment and work arrangements;
- ▶ report and record all accidents, injuries and illnesses occurring in the workplace or occurring whilst travelling to or from the workplace;
- ▶ attend Workplace Health and Safety training courses as such courses become available.
- ▶ Employees are actively encouraged to identify strategies for improving health and safety at FRSA. In particular, FRSA will consider any reasonable request for an investment in:
  - ▶ Ergonomic work stations and equipment;
  - ▶ Workplace or individual safety assessments and expert advice;
  - ▶ Training and awareness raising; and
  - ▶ The introduction of strategies to reduce stress and encourage employees to take regular breaks.

## **OFFICE ENVIRONMENT**

FRSA obtains expert advice to ensure that the office is compliant with Fire and Safety Regulations as well as Workplace Health and Safety Regulations. FRSA also promotes the safety of staff working in the FRSA office environment through the following:

- ▶ Health and safety is discussed at each staff meetings (standing agenda item).
- ▶ Training in health & safety is available to employees.
- ▶ The office is a non-smoking environment.
- ▶ Staff working alone in the office keep the front door locked at all times.
- ▶ The office is to be secured at the end of each work day;
- ▶ If there is any indication that the office security has been breached (eg burgled) staff should not enter the office alone, wait for a second person to arrive and/or contact the Police.
- ▶ There is a current First Aid kit located on the premises.

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## **3.4 CONDUCT AND ETHICS**

### **PURPOSE**

FRSA staff and volunteers to abide by the code of conduct outlined below in order to promote the philosophy and values of the organisation as well as to support a harmonious and respectful working environment.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

Employees and volunteers working on behalf of FRSA agree to:

- ▶ Uphold the vision, principles and philosophy of the organisation.
- ▶ Work to progress FRSA priorities, including the achievement of goals in the strategic plan and any business or operating plans.
- ▶ Implement the policies and procedures of FRSA and any additional guidelines or directives endorsed by the Board.
- ▶ Assist FRSA to build and promote a strong reputation for clear and accountable advocacy, effective sector development and quality research.
- ▶ Speak on behalf of FRSA, it's members or stakeholders, only when authorised and having undertaken appropriate consultation.
- ▶ Demonstrate an understanding and commitment to anti-discrimination, social inclusion and cultural diversity.
- ▶ Maintain the confidentiality of FRSA members and stakeholders.
- ▶ Observe copyright requirements and respect the intellectual property rights of FRSA.
- ▶ Participate pro-actively in organisation development activities (eg planning days and strategic reviews).
- ▶ Engage positively in supervision and development activities (eg supervision meetings, staff meetings, performance review).
- ▶ Work collaboratively with others in a spirit of teamwork to contribute to an efficient, harmonious and pleasant working environment.
- ▶ Share information and cooperate on collaborative tasks and be willing to take reasonable steps to ensure smooth hand over of shared or unfinished tasks.
- ▶ Maintain professional standards of work including being punctual and reliable.
- ▶ Give notice in advance or as soon as possible if unable to attend or perform work at an agreed time, day or location.
- ▶ Maintain and leave personal work space and equipment tidy and organised.
- ▶ Use FRSA facilities such as phone, fax and email responsibly (limited and reasonable personal use is accepted as normal) and with integrity, courtesy and respect for other members of staff.

## STATEMENT ON UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT

FRSA seeks to make an explicit statement on unacceptable conduct to provide clear guidance to all persons working on behalf of the organisation, with particular attention to the potential deliberate or inadvertent misuse of information technology.

In relation to **people** it is unacceptable to:

- ▶ Harass individuals;
- ▶ Incite or encourage unlawful or criminal behaviour;
- ▶ Behave in a manner that offends generally accepted community values;
- ▶ Author or disseminate offensive jokes or other material that vilifies a person or group of people based on their sex, race, disability or other minority group status;
- ▶ Send or repeat electronic communications designed to annoy, abuse or torment;
- ▶ Send, store or download sexually or explicit, obscene or pornographic comments or images; or
- ▶ Browse, use, send or read e-mail from another person's mailbox unless granted permission to do so.

In relation to **FRSA** it is unacceptable to:

- ▶ Disclose confidential information;

- ▶ Author content that can be passed on to third parties inadvertently and cause embarrassment to FRSA or damage FRSA's reputation (eg personal opinions, political or speculative comments);
- ▶ Use FRSA facilities in any manner that may expose FRSA to litigation, such as invasion of privacy, defamation action, advertising or selling illegal goods;
- ▶ Author/disseminate any material that violates copyright legislation; or
- ▶ Use FRSA facilities in a manner considered to be a conflict of interest.
- ▶ Send, store or download unapproved or unlicensed software;
- ▶ Process unauthorised executable files received via e-mail;
- ▶ Spam/flood the FRSA communication facilities or those of members;
- ▶ Use 'chat rooms' unless they are approved work-related discussion forums;
- ▶ Compromise FRSA virus protection, firewall or comparable security mechanisms.

All staff are required to sign a copy of the Code of Conduct and Code of Unacceptable conduct upon appointment to demonstrate that they understand and accept these expectations.

## **3.5 SUPERVISION & PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL**

### **PURPOSE**

FRSA has a commitment to quality performance at the organisation and individual level. The individual performance of FRSA employees will be monitored and enhanced through regular planned supervision and scheduled performance appraisal.

### **SUPERVISION**

This may take the form of one or more of the following arrangements:

- ▶ Regular supervision meetings with the Executive Director and/or Deputy Director;
- ▶ Planned contact or supervision by another member of staff working at the same level, perhaps with more experience or expertise;
- ▶ External supervision by an agreed peer or mentor outside the organisation, with relevant expertise to provide advice and feedback on performance.
- ▶ Formal supervision activities will include the opportunity for clear direction, clarification of expectations, recognition of achievements and resolution of problems or conflict.

The employee and supervisor should determine:

- ▶ Frequency and time allocated,
- ▶ Location or venue,
- ▶ Formality with regard to agendas and record keeping,
- ▶ Communication style and expectations.

Individuals providing supervision must have proven supervisory skills or undertake relevant training. Employees participating in supervision are encouraged to be pro-active in determining the nature of the supervision and providing regular feedback on their satisfaction with the supervision. Any significant concerns may be dealt with through the complaint procedures.

There will also be opportunities for more informal team support (eg team meetings and staff meetings) and debriefing opportunities. In particular, employees will have a designated person/s with whom they can debrief in relation to tasks that are demanding or difficult.

## **SUPERVISION PROCEDURES**

Supervision must occur on a minimum basis of once per month.

- ▶ Records of supervision meetings should be kept based on an agreement between the supervisor and supervisee.
- ▶ Complaints or disputes relating to supervision should be referred to the Executive Director.

## **VALUE OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL**

Regular performance appraisal is part of the ongoing process for review of the work environment, supervision mechanisms, staff deployment and progress toward the goals of the strategic plan. It is an opportunity to review the 'fit' between organisation objectives and the aspirations and performance of individual employees. The appraisal process can:

- ▶ Assist in determining resource allocation.
- ▶ Clarify interrelationships between employees and improve work coordination.
- ▶ Provide information as a basis for determining salary structure.
- ▶ Identify training needs or skill requirements.
- ▶ Clarify responsibilities.
- ▶ Ensure agreement on targets and standards of performance.
- ▶ Improve understanding of organisational goals and the processes by which the goals will be achieved.
- ▶ Help in the identification of problems and assist in overcoming them.
- ▶ Provide a forum for general discussion about the organisation and work satisfaction.
- ▶ Provide the basis for agreeing training and development needs or interests.
- ▶ Improve morale and job satisfaction.

The performance appraisal process aims to assist employees gain the maximum return from their contribution. It should be a positive experience involving direct communication between the employee and their immediate supervisor, based on sufficient relevant and objective information.

## **FREQUENCY OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL**

After passing an initial probationary period (usually 6 months), staff appraisals will be carried out annually. Employees may also request a performance appraisal at any time. The Director may also request an un-scheduled appraisal if a salary increment is pending or there are concerns regarding an employee's conduct or efficiency.

The FRSA Chairperson will undertake the Executive Directors Performance Appraisal as part of the annual cycle based on the financial year with changes to contract conditions or salary to take effect from 1 August.

## **KEY COMPONENTS**

Components of the process include:

- ▶ Preparation by both the staff member concerned and their supervisor;
- ▶ Contributions from third parties (including at least two colleagues);
- ▶ An interview between the staff member and their supervisor to review performance and agree goals for the next period;
- ▶ An agreement between the staff member and their supervisor with regard to the outcomes from the appraisal.

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## **3.6 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **PURPOSE**

Employees are encouraged to identify training opportunities that will enhance their work performance each year and to apply to the Executive Director for approval to undertake formal training or education.

### **TRAINING BUDGET**

FRSA includes in the annual budget each year an allocation for staff training.

Where common needs are identified internal or in-house training opportunities may be provided.

Other forms of training and development opportunity that FRSA may arrange or agree to include:

- ▶ Conference and professional development seminars;
- ▶ Short term or long term secondment to other agencies, including government agencies, community groups, academic or research institutes;
- ▶ Employee exchange programs with other peak bodies;
- ▶ Work release or unpaid leave for employees to undertake short term assignments elsewhere;
- ▶ Acting in higher positions or taking on high duties for short periods and/or job sharing or training for alternative positions within the organisation.

Individual employees will be asked to identify their training needs during performance appraisals and may be given an estimated amount available with which to purchase training. Employees are encouraged to investigate and identify training opportunities that best meet their needs.

Participation in training and development may be evaluated for its benefit to staff and the organisation. Employees may be asked to prepare a short report on training that they have attended and/or to share new knowledge with the broader staff team.

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## **3.7 FRSA EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCE POLICY & PROCEDURE**

### **PHILOSOPHY**

FRSA's approach to grievances is to emphasise resolution through information, facilitation and mediation. The Grievance Procedures should be used to raise a complaint or grievance in relation to internal human resources, operational or related matters.

### **SCOPE & LIMITATIONS**

The Grievance Procedure is available to all workers (staff & volunteers) engaged in work on behalf of FRSA.

Grievance procedures will not be used to challenge decisions of the Board, or procedures required by legislation or contractual obligations.

### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

The status quo of the employee concerned will, where possible, remain unchanged in all other aspects.

Where two or more employees believe they have an identical or common problem, they may take action together and the matter will be dealt with as a single grievance;

A matter raised within these procedures may be withdrawn by the employee at any stage during these procedures by notice in writing, to the Executive Director;

Where a grievance is raised in connection with an organisational decision, FRSA will, where practical, refrain from the activity whilst the grievance is under discussion.

Discussions should ideally be brought to a conclusion within 21 days of the issue being raised or by agreement of all parties.

Offers of compromise as well as agreements reached during these grievance procedures will not constitute precedents in regard to similar grievances, and are without prejudice to positions taken in similar circumstances or more general issues.

## **THREE STAGE GRIEVANCE PROCESS**

### ***First Level: Facilitation***

- ▶ A worker raises their point of grievance informally with the other party.
- ▶ At this stage, the worker must also discuss the situation with their supervisor, or next in line management, the Executive Director.

### ***Second Level: Mediation***

- ▶ The Executive Director may decide it is appropriate to arrange for a neutral mediator to assist in achieving resolution.

### ***Third Level: Referral to Fair Work Australia***

- ▶ Either party may refer the matter to Fair Work Australia, whose arbitration is binding in the matter.

### ***Representation***

- ▶ Either party may nominate a representative provided they do not present a conflict of interest, and are not a practicing solicitor or barrister

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## **3.8 COUNSELLING AND DISCIPLINARY**

### **PURPOSE**

FRSA is committed to effective performance management. Where an employee is found to be struggling to perform their duties to an adequate standard or consistently underperforming counselling and/or disciplinary action will be taken.

### **PRINCIPLES**

FRSA applies the principles of natural justice when responding to concerns regarding the performance or conduct of any of its employees. The individual will be made fully aware of the concerns and provided with the opportunity to respond as well as time to modify their performance or conduct where appropriate.

## **COUNSELLING AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

### **EMPLOYEES**

Where the Executive Director has serious concerns about the employee's work performance and/or conduct, the following counselling and disciplining procedure will be implemented:

1. The Executive Director will meet with the employee to discuss and attempt to resolve the problem. The employee shall have advance notice of the meeting and the issues to be discussed, the meeting will be one-to-one under normal circumstances and any records kept of the meeting will be available to the employee.
- ▶ If further action is required the Executive Director will give the employee a written warning outlining the problems that have been identified and providing a reasonable opportunity for the employee to improve his/her performance. The Executive Director is to ensure that the employee fully understands the criteria by which his/her performance is to be measured, under normal circumstances the employee will be given two calendar months to improve their performance.
  - ▶ If the staff member's work performance or conduct remains unsatisfactory at the end of the specified period of time, further warnings may be issued or termination proceedings may be instigated.

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## **3.9 TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT**

### **PURPOSE**

The conditions under which an employee may leave FRSA employment, voluntarily or involuntarily are understood by all parties and due process is followed.

### **EMPLOYEE RESIGNATION**

Employees intending to terminate their employment with FRSA are asked to notify the Executive Director in writing as far in advance as possible but at least within the period specified in their employment contract. No employee will be worse off for giving advance notice. Employees will also be asked to develop a suitable hand over process to minimise any disruption to the work for which they are responsible, this may include:

- ▶ Briefing other staff or supervisors on the tasks performed;
- ▶ Developing briefing notes with an overview of the status of various jobs or tasks,
- ▶ Training other members of staff on specific tasks or equipment.
- ▶ Employees will also be asked to complete an exit interview form and then discuss the content with the Director or another management representative.

### **TERMINATION OF AN EMPLOYEE**

In the event that FRSA considers terminating an employee due process will be followed to provide procedural fairness. FRSA will also ensure that the process complies with Industrial Relations legislation. Termination of employment may be instigated by FRSA under a variety of circumstances. The table below outlines some circumstances giving rise to termination, the procedure that will apply and the entitlements of the employee in each case.

Circumstance 1: Summary dismissal in response to serious misconduct. Serious misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- ▶ wilful or deliberate behaviour inconsistent with continuation of the contract of employment;
- ▶ conduct that creates an imminent and serious risk to the health or safety of any person, or the reputation viability or profitability of the employer's business;
- ▶ theft, fraud, assault, intoxication; or

- ▶ refusal to carry out a lawful and reasonable instruction consistent with the employee's contract of employment (unless the employee can show that in the circumstances the conduct did not make employment in the notice period unreasonable).

**Procedure:** The charge of misconduct must be proven through a fair process based on principles of natural justice. The grounds for dismissal must be clearly documented and provided to the employee in writing. The employee may have the right to appeal to decision with or without the assistance of a union representative or workplace advocate present.

**Employee Entitlements:** The employee has no entitlement to notice or payment in lieu of notice or severance or redundancy payment. Employees are entitled to payment for any accrued leave.

**Circumstance 2: Dismissal resulting from serious shortcomings** in the employees performance or conduct that have not been successfully resolved through disciplinary proceedings.

**Procedure:** The employee will be provided with a written warning of potential dismissal, this will include:

- ▶ A clear description of the problem (eg history of performance issues and attempts to resolve them or the unexpected loss of funding);
- ▶ Potential solutions (eg opportunity to make changes or improvements to performance, alternative employment options and skill requirements);
- ▶ The potential for the situation to result in termination of employment if not resolved within a given timeframe)
- ▶ A time to meet and discuss the matter with the employer, including a reasonable period for consideration of options and the offer to involve a union or workplace representative if desired.

More than one warning may be appropriate, depending on factors such as the employee's length of service and the nature of the conduct or performance. A copy of the written warning must be kept on the personnel file to demonstrate that this procedure has been followed. Ideally, this will be signed by the employee as an acknowledgment of receipt.

**Employee Entitlements:** Upon termination of employment FRSA will provide notice or pay in lieu of notice, at minimum this will be:

- ▶ One weeks notice for persons employed not more than one year
- ▶ Two weeks notice for persons employed one to three years
- ▶ Three weeks notice for persons employed three to five years
- ▶ Four weeks notice for persons employed over five years.

**Circumstance 3: Redundancy** as a result of changing circumstances such as the loss of funding, or significant changes in the structure of the organisation.

**Procedure:** The employee will be provided with a written warning of potential redundancy, this will include:

- ▶ A clear description of the reason for redundancy and the steps taken by the organisation to avoid termination of employment;
- ▶ Any alternative employment opportunities within the organisation that are available or may be created;
- ▶ Any assistance offered to the employee to secure employment elsewhere (including paid time for job searching, referee endorsement etc);
- ▶ An opportunity to meet with the Executive Director to discuss the matter.

In addition to the notice provisions above, employees may also be eligible for severance pay as detailed, depending on length of service. Severance pay provisions will typically be specified in the employment contract, where resources allow a more generous period of notice or payment in lieu of notice may be offered by the Executive Director or the Board.

## 4 ADMINISTRATION POLICIES

### 4.1 STAFF, BOARD AND REPRESENTATIVE TRAVEL POLICY

Travel is a necessary part of operating a national organisation. FRSA will often require employees, board members and other representatives to travel for various purposes – to attend meetings, forums and events, visit member organisations, provide representation or advocacy etc. The purpose of this policy and associated procedures is to provide guidance to anyone travelling for FRSA.

#### SAFETY

When travelling for FRSA the safety of staff, board members and other representatives is paramount. Individuals are encouraged to make travel arrangements that are reasonable and do not cause unnecessary fatigue or stress.

Where possible:

- Avoid travelling in the late evening or very early morning, when sleep will be significantly disrupted.
- Where travel is required outside business hours, FRSA will provide accommodation to limit the length of the working day to a reasonable number of hours.
- When choosing accommodation avoid both the cheapest and most expensive options, 3 - 4 star rated hotels are usually adequate but if you will be arriving outside normal business hours check late registration and catering options before making a selection that will best meet your needs.
- When driving long distances take a break at least every 2 hrs and avoid driving when fatigued.
- When driving in unfamiliar places, particularly in rural/remote areas, avoid unnecessary risks such as driving at dawn, dusk or after dark.
- If travelling to remote outback areas, ensure that you have a competent guide or companion and that you are comfortable with the transport and sleeping arrangements – particularly if camping or using unconventional accommodation.

#### APPROVAL

Regular travel including Board Members travelling to Board meetings and staff travelling to ongoing commitments such as advisory or reference group meetings is pre-approved. All other travel must be approved by the Executive Director, Chairperson or FRSA Finance Committee. A travel itinerary, budget and statement of purpose may be requested prior to approval being given.

For FRSA employees, additional hours worked due to time spent travelling will be treated as overtime or time in lieu with the approval of the Executive Director. This may vary on a case to case basis, for example where the travel is non essential or incorporates other employee benefits.

#### EXPENSES

The following travel expenses will be reimbursed:

- Flights / fares / rental vehicle costs
- Costs associated with the use of a private vehicle (in accordance with ATO guide)
- Accommodation / phone calls, fax and emails
- Meals (TA rates as set by ATO– unless part of a conference or event relevant to the performance of the role).
- Registration or participant fees associated with conferences or events attended

- Expenses associated with entertaining members or stakeholders (when agreed in advance)

FRSA seeks to make the best use of its resources through the careful management of travel expenses. Further guidance on travel expenses is contained in the travel procedures.

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## **4.2 STAFF BOARD AND REPRESENTATIVE TRAVEL PROCEDURES**

### **BOOKINGS**

For approved travel, flights, accommodation and hire cars can be booked directly by the traveller or through FRSA's designated travel agency. FRSA will cover the cost of travel arrangements including booking costs and the cost of changing bookings where necessary.

Whether booked directly or through our travel agency the following guidance should be followed unless there is a prior agreement with the Executive Director or Chairperson:

### **FLIGHTS**

- When booking flights please examine all the options (across airlines) and select the lowest cost economy fare wherever possible. Non-refundable tickets are preferred because of the lower cost. In particular, it is rare that changes to inbound flights would be warranted at short notice (usually if meeting dates change there is plenty of notice) so these can often be booked on a 'red e deal' type basis. More flexibility may be appropriate for return flights if finishing times are uncertain and may change on the day.
- While we encourage the purchase of low cost fares, FRSA does not expect staff, board members or representatives to book more circuitous routes or fly at inconvenient times in order to reduce costs – we seek to minimise travelling time and time away from home and family members. A balance may be struck here.
- Business class fares will only be approved under exceptional circumstances.

### **ACCOMMODATION**

- Accommodation options should be investigated (websites such as wotif can be useful) but avoid options below a 3 star rating and full-priced 5 star options. Generally we would allow between \$120 - \$240 per night, depending on location.
- If arriving after dark, check registration desk hours or arrangements and ensure you are comfortable with these.

### **MEALS**

- FRSA will cover the cost of meals while you are travelling on our behalf, while we are not prescriptive about the amount that can be spend we suggest that you limit expenditure to below \$25 for breakfast, \$40 for lunch and \$60 for dinner.

### **TAXI**

- FRSA has taxi vouchers available for staff, board members and representatives. Alternatively, staff can charge taxi fares to an FRSA credit cards and others can either invoice us or send receipts for reimbursement.

### **HIRE CARS**

- Limit your personal liability by selecting the full insurance option on any hire car used while travelling for FRSA.
- Smaller cars are more cost effective in the city but if driving on country roads larger cars are recommended but do not drive on 4wd roads unless in a suitable vehicle and experienced in doing so.
- FRA will cover the cost of GPS, street directories, road tolls etc.

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## **4.3 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

### **INCOMING AND OUTGOING MAIL**

Incoming mail is collected and sorted by administration staff. The staff team decides the frequency of collection and mechanism for distribution to individuals, subject to resource capacity (eg work load on administration staff).

The Director has the right to view all incoming mail before it is distributed to members of staff; he/she may or may not exercise this right at any time.

Staff preparing outgoing correspondence on FRSA letterhead should be aware that the Executive Director and the Chairperson are the only official spokespersons for the organisation. Any correspondence stating a position or commitment on behalf of FRSA should be authorised by a spokesperson.

Outgoing correspondence must also comply with the FRSA Communications Policy.

### **INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION TO MEMBERS**

FRSA endeavours to distribute to members all relevant information coming to its attention. This may be organised by topic matter (eg mailing lists) and different mediums may be used based on the most appropriate mechanisms for the topic (eg facsimile, e-mail, mail).

Agency members may receive all information distributed by FRSA while Associate members may receive only information deemed to be of interest to them (identified by self nominated topics etc).

FRSA maintains a record of information distributed to members including the distribution size, medium used and copies of the information distributed.

Information distributed in hard copy format will be printed on recycled paper wherever possible.

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## **4.4 RECORD KEEPING**

### **PURPOSE**

FRSA maintains records in accordance with legislative, contractual and ethical requirements. All records kept by FRSA are ordered in a way that maximises their usefulness and subject to an appropriate level of accessibility and/or security.

### **HARD COPY FILES**

FRSA has one central filing system. Copies of correspondence and other significant documents should be kept in relevant files. Any information or document that must be kept by FRSA for legal reasons must be kept in hard copy (paper) form. This may include contracts, contract variations, letters of agreement, invoices and receipts etc.

A copy of every submission, report and media release must be kept in numerical and date order for easy retrieval.

Files should not be kept on desks and should not be removed from FRSA premises without the knowledge of the Executive Director.

### **ELECTRONIC FILES**

FRSA has a central hard drive for keeping copies of all significant electronic files. This drive is backed up on security disks on a daily basis. All documents relevant to the business of FRSA must be stored on the server.

The FRSA server is structured to provide efficient access to shared files for FRSA staff. There may also be designated folders for secure or confidential files, including staff folders that contain working files or files that are not yet available for general use. In addition files that are confidential or contain information that should be protected may be locked using password access and/or kept on a secure location on the server.

Staff are to seek guidance from the Office Manager with regard to the appropriate place to save:

- ▶ Working documents and personal files;
- ▶ Final documents and public files;
- ▶ Files containing confidential or sensitive information.

Staff should avoid making duplicate copies of documents on the server and all staff are responsible for maintaining order, deleting old file versions etc.

Staff may use their local computer drive for maintaining working documents and electronic files that are not for general use, however they must be aware that this drive is not backed up and therefore data may be lost if there is any computer failure.

## **LIBRARY MATERIAL**

Record systems, including filing systems are logical, systematic, professional and accessible to all approved staff.

## **PERSONNEL RECORDS**

The Executive Director and Payroll Administrator maintain personnel files. Management staff with supervision responsibilities may access personnel records on a limited basis. Staff have access to their own personnel files but not those of others.

## **PERSONNEL FILE PROCEDURES**

A hard copy file is kept on all personnel including employees, volunteers and contractors. Information contained in the personnel file includes (but may not be limited to):

- ▶ Up-to-date personal details (eg address, home telephone contacts etc);
- ▶ Up-to-date emergency contacts;
- ▶ Copies of the original application for employment form, letters and resume etc.;
- ▶ Employment contract and duty statements and any subsequent letters or changes to contractual arrangements;
- ▶ Any correspondence between the employee and FRSA;
- ▶ Records of performance appraisals;
- ▶ Records of training or development activity;
- ▶ Records of any disciplinary or termination proceedings.

Personnel files are stored in a secure place with access limited to the Director, management and approved administration staff. All personnel have access to their own file on request but cannot access other people's file without approval and may not remove any of the contents of the file.

Personnel files must be kept for a minimum of seven years following separation from the organisation. After seven years a file may be summarised.

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## **4.5 OFFICE ENVIRONMENT & EQUIPMENT**

### **PURPOSE**

The FRSA office environment is an important factor in the general health and well-being of staff as well as the overall productivity and efficiency of the organisation, this policy serves to demonstrate our commitment to maintaining the work place.

### **WORK SPACE**

FRSA seeks to provide all permanent and semi-permanent employees with a regular work space that is adequate for performing the main tasks of their position and allows for some degree of control over the physical layout of equipment and materials. The work space should provide some area for the storage for personal belongings and the placement of personal items such as photographs, posters etc.

While care is taken to provide security for employee belongings, no responsibility is taken by FRSA for any lost or stolen items. Staff must use their own discretion regarding personal items kept or stored at the office.

Employees are responsible for ensuring that their work space arrangements are not detrimental or problematic to other staff. For example, other staff have the right to object to posters, music playing or furniture layout that in any way interferes with their own work performance.

### **COMMON SPACE**

FRSA provides common space for staff to use including:

- ▶ Boardroom and meeting rooms
- ▶ Kitchen
- ▶ Library
- ▶ Photocopying resource room

Staff are encouraged to use common space for conducting work related activity such as meetings and also for taking breaks. Systems such as room bookings and kitchen rosters must be adhered to and it is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that common areas are kept clean and tidy.

### **SECURITY**

The office is equipped with door locks and a security alarm which all staff should be familiar with. All staff are expected to take responsibility for ensuring the security of the office which includes checking that doors are locked, blinds are drawn and the alarm is set before leaving the office unattended.

Staff working alone in the office, outside regular business hours, must keep the front door locked at all times.

### **RECYCLING**

Staff are encouraged to recycle paper and other materials (eg bottles, cans etc) and facilities are provided for this. Recycled paper is to be used for printing draft documents and internal communications.

### **EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY**

Staff have access to adequate equipment for their work and are trained in its use. Staff who feel inadequately equipped to perform their work are to raise the issue with management.

Systems are in place to ensure that equipment is regularly maintained and repair of equipment is attended to promptly. Staff are encouraged to use the IT problem log to address any problems with computers or software.

There are some restrictions on the use of equipment:

- ▶ No IT equipment is to be connected to the FRSA network without approval.
- ▶ No software is to be installed on the FRSA network or individual computers without approval.

## **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION**

E-mail and Internet services are provided to FRSA staff as a corporate tool and integral part of everyday work practices. These communication tools, if used properly, are conducive to good working relationships and efficient work practices.

Staff are permitted to use e-mail and Internet facilities for personal use provided such use is incidental to formal duties and in accordance with the code of conduct and this policy. Personal use is acceptable for maintaining work/life balance, meeting family commitments, networking and taking breaks etc. Personal use will be considered problematic only if the volume or time spent is having an impact on staff productivity, interfering with normal duties or compromising FRSA resources. This also applies to social networking sites (such as facebook).

In using any system to transmit, receive or store data staff must use the facilities in a accordance with the FRSA Code of Conduct in order to promote the philosophy and values of the organisation as well as to support a harmonious and respectful working environment. FRSA provides clear guidance to all persons working on behalf of the organisation, with particular attention to the potential deliberate or inadvertent misuse of information technology. It is unacceptable to:

- ▶ Harass individuals;
- ▶ Incite or encourage unlawful or criminal behaviour;
- ▶ Behave in a manner that offends generally accepted community values;
- ▶ Author or disseminate offensive jokes or other material that vilifies a person or group of people based on their sex, race, disability or other minority group status;
- ▶ Send or repeat electronic communications designed to annoy, abuse or torment;
- ▶ Send, store or download sexually or explicit, obscene or pornographic comments or images; or
- ▶ Browse, use, send or read e-mail from another person's mailbox unless granted permission to do so.

FRSA has the right to monitor and examine all aspects of its electronic communications facilities to ensure proper use and protection of information assets, including:

- ▶ Staff e-mail content and e-mail traffic
- ▶ Internet sites visited
- ▶ Materials downloaded or uploaded

Monitoring may be undertaken by IT support contractors or administration staff. In the event of a suspect breach of acceptable usage the Executive Director will be notified. If it is found that the staff member has used communication facilities improperly they may be subject to misconduct action. Where the nature of the misconduct involves potentially illegal activity, law enforcement authorities will be notified and FRSA will cooperate with any criminal proceedings.

If a staff member inadvertently comes in contact with offensive or inappropriate material, they are to advise the Administration Manager, in order to provide an explanation if the material is subsequently identified. Staff members must not copy, save or in any other way propagate the unacceptable material.

Information sent by e-mail may be viewed as endorsed by FRSA, staff are therefore responsible and accountable for all e-mail sent from the FRSA IT network. Staff must be conscious when preparing e-mail that content may be passed on beyond the original recipient. Careful consideration of the content, style and language is expected.

E-mail is not private. All e-mail sent by staff is deemed to be the property of FRSA subject to provisions of the Privacy Act 1988.

Information received by e-mail and/or available on the Internet may not be accurate. Staff are obliged to authenticate, check and validate information received by e-mail or accessed on the Internet before using it for business purposes.

Business related e-mails sent and received, are viewed as official records of the work conducted by FRSA. Staff must use discretion to identify e-mails containing significant or potentially significant information that should be printed and filed in hard copy records for future references and/or legal purposes.

Staff using electronic communication facilities are responsible for network optimisation, therefore internal group mailings (ie e-mails sent to 'all staff') should be kept in check by:

- ▶ Ensuring that information regarding official FRSA business is accurate and approved prior to distribution
- ▶ Distributing only information that is important to all staff,
- ▶ Reducing strain on the system by using links to documents on common hard drives, rather than actual documents or large attachments.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

When purchasing equipment, building, modifying or renovating premises or otherwise changing the physical work environment, FRSA considers potential improvements to accessibility for people with a disability.



## 5 Review Table

POLICY/PROCEDURE		Ratified	Amended / Reviewed	Next Review
<b>1 GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT</b>				
1.1	Board Operations	15.8.07	16.06.09 23.02.2011	February 2013
1.2	FRSA Board Meeting Procedures	11.9.07	15.2.08 5.8.08 16.06.09	Jun 11
1.3	Board Travel	15.2.08	16.06.09	Jun 11
1.4	FRSA Board Communication Procedures	15.2.08	16.06.09	Jun 11
1.5	Executive Authority	15.8.07	16.06.09	Jun 11
1.6	Planning	15.8.07	16.06.09	Jun 11
1.7	Financial Management	15.8.07	16.06.09 15.2.08 5.8.08	Jun 11
1.8	Financial Management Procedures	15.8.07	16.06.09	Jun 11
1.9	Asset Management Procedures	15.5.08	16.06.09	Jun 11
1.10	Conflict of Interest	15.8.07	23.02.2011 16.06.09 15.2.08	Feb 2013
1.10	Risk Management	15.8.07	16.06.09	Jun 11
1.11	Partnerships with Member Agencies	23.02.2011		Feb 2013
1.12	Organisation Policy Development	15.8.07	16.06.09	Jun 11
<b>2 EFFECTIVE REPRESENTATION</b>				
2.1	Membership	15.8.07	24.3.10 15.10.08	March 2012
2.2	Complaints and Feedback	15.8.07	24.3.10	March 2012
2.3	Communications	15.8.07	24.3.10	March 2012
2.4	Social Policy Development	15.8.07	24.3.10	March 2012
2.5	Projects Policy	15.8.07	24.3.10	March 2012
2.6	Quality Assurance	15.8.07	24.3.10	March 2012

<b>POLICY/PROCEDURE</b>		<b>Ratified</b>	<b>Amended / Reviewed</b>	<b>Next Review</b>
2.7	Relationships and Partnerships	15.8.07	24.3.10	March 2012
2.8	Consultation through Policy Advisers	15.2.08	24.3.10	March 2012
2.9	Protocols for Consultation Activities	15.2.08	24.3.10	March 2012
<b>3 HUMAN RESOURCES</b>				
3.1	Recruitment	15.8.07	27.9.09	Aug 14
3.2	Health And Safety	15.8.07	27.9.09 27.10.09	Aug 14
3.3	Conduct and Ethics	15.8.07	27.9.09 27.10.09 Aug 2012	Aug 13
3.4	Supervision and Performance Appraisal	15.8.07	Aug 09 15.2.08 27.10.09	Aug 14
3.5	Professional Development	15.8.07	27.9.09 Aug 2012	Aug 13
3.6	Counselling and Disciplinary	15.8.07	27.9.09	Aug 14
3.7	Termination of Employment	15.8.07	27.9.09	Aug 14
<b>4 OPERATIONS &amp; ADMINISTRATION</b>				
4.1	Information Management	15.8.07	27.9.09	Aug 14
4.2	Record Keeping	15.8.07	27.9.09	Aug 14
4.3	Office Environment & Equipment	15.8.07	27.9.09 15.2.08 Aug 2012	Aug 13

## 6 Related Documents

List of documents and forms referred to:

- Position Description for Directors
- Guidelines for FRSA Representatives
- Expense Reimbursement Form
- Declaration of Interest Form