

**LAUNCH OF THE ST JOHN AMBULANCE AUSTRALIA (TASMANIA)  
YOUTH PROGRAM  
REMARKS BY  
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC  
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA  
GOVERNMENT HOUSE DRAWING ROOM, FRIDAY 22 MARCH 2024**

Good afternoon, everyone, and a very warm welcome to Government House for the launch of the St John Tasmania Youth Program.

I begin by acknowledging the Muwinina people upon whose Country we gather, who flourished on Country as part of the South-East Nation of Aboriginal people. We honour them, and today's Tasmanian Aboriginal Community, as ongoing custodians of Country. I recognise their enduring culture and continued connection to land, sea, and waters.

As the Deputy Prior of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, each year I am honoured to host an Investiture of the Order, and the St John Ambulance Tasmania Annual General Meeting. I enjoy these events, as they give me the opportunity to meet with and talk to members of the Order and to supporters, who work hard every day for the benefit of our community.

I am therefore also very pleased to host this launch of the St John Tasmania Youth Program. One of my aims during the remainder of my term is to focus on education and engagement with youth. Education and service of others brings immense benefits, not just to those who undertake them, but to everyone around them.

Your St John Tasmania Youth Program is a part of the wider National Program. It is designed to support young people from 11 to 17 to learn first-aid techniques and to explore career options in health-related sectors.

Many youth members will go on to careers in nursing, medicine, paramedics, or other emergency services. You will hear from Jamie Kopper shortly. He will speak about how this program benefitted him in his journey.

The program has been in operation in various guises since 1925. It was recently reviewed by the St John Ambulance Tasmania Board in 2022 to ensure that it remains relevant and aligned with St John values, and appropriately risk managed.

The importance of the launch of this program and this launch is evident by the attendance here of some very senior members of the St John family.

Professor Mark Compton, who is the Lord Prior of the Order is present. Also here is the Chancellor of the Australian Priory, Cameron Oxley, who last month was promoted to the Grade of Bailiff Grand Cross. This is the most senior grade within the Order. We also have representatives from St John Youth leadership across Australia.

Shortly, I shall be presenting a Shield to youth members from Tasmania who won the National Spirit of St John Award last year. Teams from around Australia competed for this Award and were assessed against criteria aligned with the motto of the Order of St John – *pro utilitate hominum*. Over two days, teams undertook activities at five stations: personal and team resilience; presentation and planning skills; creativity; use of emerging technology; and ethics.

I am sure you agree that this is an impressive range of skills demonstrated, individually and collectively, by the winning team. It also demonstrates how well the youth program prepared them for this award.

It now gives me the greatest pleasure to officially launch the revitalised St John Tasmania Youth Program. I am sure that it will continue to support young people in a safe and inclusive manner, while providing challenging and exciting options to develop as a leader, healthcare professional and community member.

Thank you.