

**MEALS ON WHEELS ASSOCIATION OF TASMANIA INC
RECEPTION TO MARK THE
70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HOBART BRANCH AND
50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EASTERN SHORE BRANCH
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, WEDNESDAY 9 JULY 2025**

VICE-REGAL SALUTE

Good evening, everyone. I warmly welcome you all to Government House for this reception to mark two significant milestones: the 70th anniversary of the Hobart Branch and the 50th anniversary of the Eastern Shore Branch of Meals on Wheels Tasmania.

May I begin by acknowledging the Muwinina people upon whose land we gather. I acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as ongoing custodians of country. I recognise their enduring culture and deep connection to land, sea, sky, and waters.

As Patron of Meals on Wheels Tasmania, I have great pleasure in celebrating with you and acknowledging the impact of your volunteers across our State on those who are unable to cook meals for themselves, and who benefit from your support and service.

Tonight is an opportunity to acknowledge your longevity and your legacy of care and community service. You have supported tens of thousands of Tasmanians over generations.

Since your first delivery in 1955 from Hobart—using just one car and meals prepared offsite—Meals on Wheels Tasmania has grown into a valued part of our community. Across our State, some 750 volunteers and 50 dedicated staff deliver around 250,000 meals each year from 15 branches.

Meals on Wheels is one of the most vital services we offer, supporting the health, independence, and wellbeing of older Tasmanians and others living alone. With one in four older Australians facing the risk of social isolation, and over a million at risk of malnutrition, your service is essential.

I am pleased to celebrate your Hobart and Eastern Shore branches tonight and recognise your enduring commitment and the generosity of your volunteers and staff.

The Hobart Branch has delivered nearly 80,000 meals to almost 600 clients over the past year. Volunteers and drivers continue to turn up in all conditions—rain, hail or shine—and they deliver not only food but friendship.

Your Eastern Shore Branch also continues to serve. Originally formed in response to the 1975 Tasman Bridge tragedy, this Branch has since grown. This year, you held volunteer celebrations, gifted Easter and Christmas presents for clients, and recognised long-serving team members, whose dedication exemplifies the spirit of Meals on Wheels.

To everyone, our volunteers, coordinators, drivers, cooks, fundraisers, and supporters, thank you.

As we celebrate these two anniversaries, may we also renew our commitment to their founding vision for Meals on Wheels.

On behalf of all Tasmanians, thank you for what you do, and congratulations on these milestones.

Enjoy your reception.