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EXECUTIVE HALF YEAR REPORT

NAME	Jack Donovan
POSITION	Treasurer Secretary
REPORT PERIOD	1 st January – 30 June, 2018
HOURS WORKED	287
HOURS REQUIRED	260

For purposes of focus and fluency I have organized my summary under the relevant constitutional and strategic goals that relate to the treasurer position.

I also followed the format from the previous half year report as it was effective in demonstrating the work done.

Priority Goals | Strategic:

A Strong Association

A Student Friendly Wellington

Priority Goals | Constitutional:

Services

Finance

Accountability

Goal 4: Services: to provide quality, cost effective services for the benefit of members and, where appropriate, students.

A Strong Association:

This is an integral part of my role within VUWSA. It is to ensure that the organization is providing the best value for money for its' members and students' as a whole. This is an internal focus, looking at the various policies, procedures and the general behavior of VUWSA to ensure that VUWSA can continue its fantastic work into the future by remaining cost effective.

Constitutional Goal. Our services are the primary way that we interact with our students and if they are not strong then we are not serving them. This is why it is so important that the treasurer secretary work behind the scenes to ensure that these services run as effective as possible.

Independence/Financial Stability:

VUWSA is an independent organization from the University, to allow us to ensure the University is accountable for all of their actions, praising the positive and calling out the negative. However a continued concern that I, and previous Treasurers have had, is that VUWSA continues to rely heavily on the grant received from the Student Service Levy. This goes towards funding services, Salient, and our staff. By being so reliant on the grant, this lessens our negotiating power with the university in other areas. This year we have been very fortunate to have had a positive relationship with the University and key staff members, but as VUWSA and the university continue to grow and change year by year, this is not an ideal situation. The Revenue and Venture Committee was formed to address this, but this issue is unlikely to be solved until VUWSA is in a more financially stable. However, this is a bit of a catch 22, but through prudent spending I believe we will reach this state.

This is a key and important concept for VUWSA, we are independent from the University, enabling us to truly represent students in University affairs. However the reality doesn't match up with the rhetoric as well as one might hope. VUWSA relies very heavily on the grant it gets each year from the Student Services Levy to provide the bulk of its funding. This grant primarily goes towards funding our services, salient and those who work behind the scenes to make VUWSA what it is.

Committees:

Committees are the cornerstone of "*A Strong Association*", and takes up a large proportion of my time. Committees aren't sexy, but it is what ensures that VUWSA continues to push forward with its campaigns, accountability and transparency.

Executive Reporting Committee

We go through and review work reports. As thrilling as you can imagine. It is a struggle to meet often as allowed due to the work report policy that doesn't have a deadline. I am currently updating this policy in order for this committee to function as intended.

Audit and Finance Committee

We meet when necessary to discuss the internal finances of the association and decisions which need to be made. This allows for the exec to be filled in on the internal financial information that otherwise wouldn't come up in a normal executive meeting. Issues include budgeting issues, rep group funding and the sale then purchase of a new VUWSA vehicle.

Policy Committee

We review and write the internal VUWSA policies and constitution in order to ensure these are all relevant and up to date. These include the following new policies that are in the process of being written:

- Finance policy
- Media Policy
- Sexual violence and harassment policy
- Sustainability policy
- Work Report Policy

Revenue and Venture Committee

This Committee, like previously mentioned, focuses on other ways of generating revenue for the organization. We have explored merchandise, charitable fundraisers and worked on the recommendation of previous years. One that was suggested by past years and one I addressed when campaigning was VUWSA funded student start-ups. However, through further research I discovered that this was simple not possible as due to the amount of work and effort, as well as risk, that this would require.

Clubs Council

This is a council made up of myself, the clubs and activity officer, elected members from clubs and a representative of Vic Rec, who currently administer clubs. I minute these meetings, and give input where I can, but Connor is the real star and you should definitely check out his half year report for those details .

Goal 7: Finance: to maximize the member benefits by minimizing fees or user charges.

Oooh yeah, this is the cream of the crop when it comes to my role. Budgets, minimizing costs and making sure that VUWSA spends it's money in the best possible manner.

Budget

I am very proud to admit that this year we managed to set a zero deficit budget this year, and as VUWSA is a prudent organization anyway this'll likely result in a small profit. To complete this however, we had to make cuts to services that could handle it. This was a difficult but rewarding start to the year. On one hand I completed my election promise, but on the other it impacted service lines negatively. I continue to have concerns about, as our expenses increase year to year, how our income may struggle to keep up.

Goal 9: Accountability: to ensure accountability to, and representation of, members.

I believe that accountability for the exec comes through clearly with our reporting of our work through Salient and our work reports. However, as prior mentioned, I believe we could be held to account further with changes to the work report system to ensure a consistent, and more in depth upload schedule. There are also constitutional changes I am looking to make closer to the AGM, and further policies I want to write in order to give future executives a clearer path to success and to achieve transparency within their roles.

Other Goals:

Goal 6: Public Issues:

Like prior treasurer/secretary's before me, I have taken up the mantle of the devil's advocate in many of our discussions. As I had virtually no prior involvement of VUWSA before my election, I was able to look critically at situations that arose from an outsiders point of view. This showed clearly through my points raised around issues with NZUSA, and internal issues that arose during the year. I also believe that I was able to take opinions and concerns from other students and members of the executive to the president or whomever relevant in a discreet but clear, that allowed many issues to be tackled before they got more serious.

General Tasks and Initiatives

The Treasurer/Secretary role is filled with weird, general tasks and initiatives that seem to constantly pop up. Searching through old files to find handover notes, memes, and bizarre communication gave me an insight into past executives that I had no way of knowing prior.

O-Week was wild. I've never dealt with so many drunk freshers since I was a drunk fresher myself. However, it was also an important bonding moment with my fellow executive. This coupled with our retreat really gave me valuable insight into how they worked and also just how cool everyone was. Whilst the work was physically and mentally pretty draining, it was heaps of fun. I did Chase & Status, Toga Party, Comedy Night and the VUWSA Stall which kept me pretty busy but was cool to hear the experience such events through sober eyes for once.



The whole gang (minus Paddy)



Me and ma boi Connor (Clubs and activity man)

The March on Midland Rally was an incredible thing to be apart of. Whilst I had no part in organizing it, I helped with the pack up and down and marched with my fellow students. This is really representative of my year this year. I've had so many amazing opportunities that I never would have been bothered to take apart in and help out in some kinda of meaning full way. Even events such as Study Free Stress Week (as I like to call it) was so cool to take apart in as you can really see the difference that VUWSA is making.

Summary

Goddamn. This has been some of the coolest shit. My role, like I mentioned, isn't sexy, but it needs to be done well so that all the other interesting, student facing stuff can happen. All seriousness though, I love my role. It gives you an amazing insight into the incredible work my fellow executive members are doing, and the ability to get involved where you can. I wouldn't have changed anything about this first semester (except maybe studying a lil more). I have life long friends already, with genuine people who care about important issues. When I first got involved in VUWSA, I was concerned it would be full of student politicians, who would faff around all day, but I am delighted to be apart of such a great group of hard working people. I hope the rest of the year can go half as well, and that we can continue to deliver for our students.

