



Aotearoa New Zealand
Association of Social Workers



Tangata Whenua
Social Workers Association

The following draft Terms of Reference is proposed to be piloted in the coming two years until the next General Meeting in 2018. This is to enable the establishment of the Committee and, if necessary address any unanticipated issues and/or further clarification of any processes that may be required.

PREAMBLE:

The establishment of an Indigenous committee within the structure of IFSW is an extension of the decision made at the General Assembly meeting in Adelaide in October 2004, where the General Assembly adopted a **Policy on Indigenous People**. That adoption was widely celebrated amongst the indigenous social work community.

- It validated a number of indigenous social work developments.
- It confirmed that social workers should not assume that western/colonial ideals, or the norms of the dominant cultures, best serve the indigenous populations.
- It stated that Indigenous social workers can play an essential role in defining and resolving issues that concern indigenous peoples.
- It also stated that Indigenous social workers should take the lead in developing initiatives and services for indigenous peoples.

Indigenous social workers celebrated that policy. They met at the conference following the meeting to discuss how this policy could be utilised to strengthen the indigenous social work identity both professionally and in practice. The outcome was the holding of the 1st *'Indigenous Voices in Social Work: Not Lost in Translation'* conference in Hawai'i in May 2007, hosted by the University of Hawai'i.

At a national level, the National Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Workers Association in Australia, the Tangata Whenua Social Workers Association in Aotearoa New Zealand and the Aboriginal Social Workers Society in Manitoba, Canada led the challenge to assert their identity as indigenous peoples within the social work profession and within the practice of social work.

The uniqueness of the indigenous voice within the social work profession was reaffirmed at the 2nd *'Indigenous Voices in Social Work: Indigenous Knowledges: Resurgence, Implementation and Collaboration'* conference in 2013 organised by the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada. At that conference, a resolution was endorsed by social workers from eleven countries, though not all members of an identifiable social work association, their identity as indigenous people drew them to the conference and to unanimously supporting the resolution.

In recognition of the resolution and to progress the tenets of the IFSW Policy on Indigenous People the establishment of an indigenous committee would address the issue of indigenous representation within IFSW and assist with policy statements of IFSW, UN and elsewhere.

The motion to form the Indigenous Social Workers Caucus Committee was supported and passed by the IFSW General Assembly in 2014 at Melbourne, Australia.

PURPOSE:

The IFSW Indigenous Social Workers Caucus Committee is to work collaboratively with:

- The IFSW to address indigenous social work issues and foster further development of indigenous social work knowledges and practices
- The IFSW to advise on, consult and develop policy and procedures effecting / impacting on indigenous knowledges, practices and peoples worldwide
- The United Nations Indigenous Committee delegates
- The IFSW and the United Nations Indigenous Committee on identifying and prioritising education and research specific to indigenous social work knowledges, practices and peoples worldwide.

ACCOUNTABILITIES:

- The IFSW Indigenous Social Workers Caucus Committee is accountable first and foremost to all indigenous peoples and indigenous social worker organisations whether they are part of member organisations or not.
- The IFSW Indigenous Social Workers Caucus Committee recognises that Indigenous Social Workers are accountable to the practices, ways of knowing and being that lie within the peoples whom they may be invited to work alongside.
- The IFSW Indigenous Social Workers Caucus Committee and the IFSW are accountable to uphold the IFSW Policy Statement on Indigenous Peoples and Human Rights as well as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- The IFSW Indigenous Social Workers Caucus Committee is accountable directly to the IFSW Executive Committee.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- The IFSW Indigenous Social Workers Caucus Committee is responsible to ensure all national indigenous social worker organisations are able to seek membership of IFSW as of *right* by working towards IFSW constitutional change to facilitate such membership.
- The IFSW Indigenous Social Workers Caucus Committee is responsible to support all indigenous social worker organisations in strategizing how membership of IFSW can be achieved if this is what they desire.
- the IFSW Indigenous Social Workers Caucus Committee is responsible to engage in communications whether electronic or face to face with IFSW member organisations, United Nations representatives and other organisations to further the understanding of indigenous social work issues and indigenous social worker concerns within all fields of social work education and practice
- The IFSW Indigenous Social Workers Caucus Committee is responsible for providing regular written Minutes and Annual Reports directly to the IFSW Executive Committee.

MEMBERSHIP OF IFSW INDIGENOUS SOCIAL WORKERS CAUCUS COMMITTEE:

Membership:

- A maximum of five (5) indigenous social workers in 'good standing' with an IFSW Member organisation and endorsed by the indigenous organisations or peoples represented by that member organisation or coordinating body for the country;
- An IFSW Exec. Committee Board Liaison (advisory role);
- The IFSW President (ex-officio) ;
- Other members as seen appropriate by the IFSW Indigenous Social Workers Caucus Committee and IFSW.

Inaugral Selection Process:

- Any member organization of IFSW can propose a member for the IFSW Indigenous Social Workers Caucus Committee for ratification and appointment by the IFSW Executive Committee.
- The proposed member however must be endorsed by the indigenous organisations or peoples represented by the member organisation or Coordinating Body for that country.
- If the IFSW member organisation or Coordinating Body are not representative of the indigenous peoples of that country, then the proposed member needs to evidence support and endorsement from the elders and band, tribe, iwi, hapu.

Subsequent Selection Process:

- Any member organization of IFSW can propose a member to the IFSW Indigenous Social Workers Caucus Committee.
- The Committee will follow a selection process, devised by the Committee and present the selected member for ratification and appointment by the IFSW Executive Committee.
- The proposed member however must be endorsed by the indigenous organisations or peoples represented by the member organisation or Coordinating Body for that country.

LEADERSHIP OF IFSW INDIGENOUS SOCIAL WORKER CAUCUS COMMITTEE:

- Is determined by the indigenous peoples who comprise the Committee.
- Ensures decisions are reached collaboratively and by consensus being respectful of the differing traditions that are observed by the members of the Committee.

EXECUTIVE LIAISON PERSON:

- To advise the IFSW Indigenous Social Workers Caucus Committee on all policies and procedures pertaining to the operation of IFSW.

TERMS OF OFFICE FOR THE IFSW INDIGENOUS SOCIAL WORKERS CAUCUS COMMITTEE:

- The term for each member is for a period of 2 (two) years with the possibility of renewal for a further 2 periods.

- The term for the Executive Liaison Person cannot exceed the term of such member on the Executive Committee.

DISCONTINUATION OF A TERM OF OFFICE FOR A MEMBER (S) OF THE IFSW INDIGENOUS SOCIAL WORKERS CAUCUS COMMITTEE:

- Failure to uphold the Purpose, Accountabilities and Responsibilities of the IFSW Indigenous Social Workers Caucus Committee.

Process:

- Firstly, a concerted process will be followed to seek resolution.
- The process will observe the rules of natural justice.
- If a resolution is not reached the IFSW President in consultation with the IFSW Indigenous Social Workers Caucus Committee, the Secretary General and the IFSW Executive Committee will adjudicate the decision.