

17 April 2020

Hon David Pisoni MP  
Minister for Innovation and Skills  
[officeofministerpisoni@sa.gov.au](mailto:officeofministerpisoni@sa.gov.au)

Dear Minister

COTA SA is once again writing to you to bring to your attention the need for a focus on mature unemployment, especially in the aftermath of COVID-19. Older workers, already disadvantaged in finding and keeping work, will particularly struggle to regain work as we rebuild the South Australian economy.

We are distressed to learn that State Government funding for Don't Overlook Mature Expertise (DOME) will cease from May 2020. For many years DOME has been an important voice and a very practical supporter of 2000 job seekers at any one time.

In your letter to COTA SA dated April 2019, funding for DOME was the only funding from State Government that was dedicated to assisting older job seekers. Age discrimination is rampant in employment. It results in older people spending twice as long unemployed and underemployed than any other age group and is a direct contributor to homelessness and poverty in older age.

COTA SA forwarded its 2020-21 State Budget submission to you in January 2020 but we have attached it again for your convenience. We again prioritised mature employment and urged State Government funding for a project with business and workers to trial new opportunities for mature employment and enterprise. Our estimate is that such a project would cost about \$300,000 per annum and could make an impact over 3 years.

We urge you to review the decision to defund DOME and to prioritise mature employment, particularly in the post COVID-19 environment. Addressing mature employment will save millions of dollars in the State Government downstream expenditure required to address homelessness and poverty for a rapidly growing number of older people.

I would welcome a chance to meet with you and invite you to contact my Executive Assistant, Ross Atkinson at [ratkinson@cotasa.org.au](mailto:ratkinson@cotasa.org.au) to make a time.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely



**Jane Mussared**  
Chief Executive