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## Allowances Report

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**Madam President, distinguished guests, members of ICPA, ladies and gentlemen. It is with great pleasure that I present the Allowances Portfolio Report.**

Once again, this time of year has come around so quickly, I look back on what has happened in the last twelve months and I wonder where the time has gone. This last year sees me farewell my second born as he finished Year 12 and now begins a new adventure. My children are fortunate to be products of ICPA, just as my husband and I are. Without ICPA we would quite possibly not have had the opportunities and experiences that have made us what we are today.

These thoughts stir up a new passion for ICPA and the year ahead. I want to thank you all for coming today and your presence reinforces the need for us to continue all the hard work that we do as members and State Councillors.

ICPA members are the policy makers of the Association. This means that branches bring their issues to our Annual State Conference for other guests to hear the passionate debates. These issues are then taken further, usually to politicians and department advisors to be acted on. ICPA lobbies to ensure that ALL students throughout rural and remote areas have equity of access to an education appropriate to their needs - WHATEVER the educational/learning institute.

Since coming on State Council, it has been a very busy time continually learning all there is to know about Allowances, only to find that when you finally have it figured it out it changes. There are so many variants to each allowance and we don't expect to always know the ever changing figures, criteria for eligibility, closing dates and contact details but if you need to know we will certainly find out and assist you in any way we can. Please just be aware that although we are State Councillors and act on your behalf, we do this completely voluntarily and most of us have families, full time jobs within a family business or in town, second homes or all of the above.

Allowances are not designed to cover all the costs associated with educating our children, but they can and do provide an opportunity of support to families that may never have been able to access these educational opportunities. The difference in educational outcomes between rural and remote students compared to those students in metropolitan areas is well documented. The Allowances that ICPA NSW lobbies hard for, go a long way to bridging the educational gap in providing greater equity and access to educational institutions for rural and remote children. However, we always need to do more, especially when we still have so many rural and remote students unable to access any financial support.

Sometimes we present motions for years before finally seeing progress. Sometimes we need to review what we are asking for and see how we can word it differently to change the way a situation is viewed by those with the power to approve or make changes.

Personal stories make great case studies to present on deputation and help to give real life experiences to our motions.

Each year both state and federal ICPA councils lobby respective state and federal governments for increased financial support through various allowances to assist with educating rural and

remote children. On behalf of all ICPA-NSW members, I would like to thank our Federal Council colleagues and NSW State and Federal governments in working together to increase the financial support offered to our rural and remote families. ICPA families are truly grateful.

When applying for any allowances, families are encouraged not to self-assess their eligibility, but are encouraged to provide all the information that is required and allow the assessment processes to occur.

ICPA-NSW continually updates and provides an annual allowance spreadsheet as a summary of what allowances are available, eligibility criteria, closing dates and contact details. It is available in editions of Top Wire, on the website, Facebook posts or by contacting the allowances convenor.

In closing I would like to thank my fellow State Councillors for all their assistance since my taking on the role of Allowances Convenor and for all the time you give voluntarily to help provide assistance to our members.

**Tanya Mitchell**  
**Allowances Convenor**

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