

***Making
an inclusive
Australia for
deaf people***



Annual Report 2015 – 2016



Deaf Australia Incorporated

PO Box 1348

Blackburn North, Victoria 3130

ABN: 65 174 780 885

For the year ended 30 June 2016

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deafaustralia.org.au/information/reports.

About us

Our Organisation:

Deaf Australia is the deaf-led peak organisation representing deaf and hard of hearing people in Australia. We promote the advancement of human rights and equality for deaf people by collaborating with our members and stakeholders to influence governments in implementing the United Nations Conventions and the National Disability Strategy.

Our Guiding Principles:

Language:

Deaf Australia believes it is a human right for every deaf and hard of hearing person to acquire and express themselves in Auslan and English.

Perception:

Deaf Australia must work to change the perception of deaf and hard of hearing people who use Auslan to recognise ourselves as a unique community with our own language and culture, and that a 'one size fits all' approach is not an effective solution.

Self-Determination:

Deaf Australia believes that our society must accept our organisation as an integral part in any decision-making process that affect deaf and hard of hearing people. Deaf Australia believes and adheres to the philosophy; "**nothing about us without us**".

Management:

Deaf Australia is committed to achieving our objectives through effective management of our people and resources, and through collaborative work with 'like-mind' organisations.

Chairperson's Report

In the last Annual Report, I spoke about "change", and the need for Deaf Australia to transform itself to remain relevant and continue to represent the Australian deaf community. This transformation continued this financial year.

Fortunately, Deaf Australia was able to continue receiving some funding from the Federal Government for capacity development, through the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO, of which Deaf Australia is a member organisation). With this funding, Deaf Australia could continue employing Kyle Miers as our full time Chief Executive.

The shift in our focus towards capacity building - being able to develop ourselves into a resilient organisation that is less reliant on limited funding streams - is ongoing. Throughout the year, under Kyle's prudent stewardship, Deaf Australia has reduced our costs and have made progress with new funding opportunities. The Board has acknowledged the importance of making significant progress in pursuing these funding opportunities, particularly in the new landscape in Australia for people with disabilities, with the roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

There remains a lot of uncertainty about the NDIS, however with uncertainty comes opportunity. It is important to remain committed as a community to navigate ourselves successfully through these changes, and to make these changes work better for us.

It is for this reason Deaf Australia recognised the need to gather together as a community, and to discuss these opportunities and share ideas. In partnership with the Australian Sign Language Interpreters Association (ASLIA), Deaf Australia is launching the inaugural National Auslan Conference which will be held in Melbourne in October 2016. While the conference has taken considerable effort and investment in organising, the benefit to the wider deaf community will be tremendous by *strengthening deaf diversity*.

This national conference is also a terrific opportunity to recognise the 30th birthday of Deaf Australia. It is very humbling to think that I am the chairperson of an organisation that was established only 30 years ago by a fantastic, committed group of deaf leaders. As I was growing up, I recognised the significant impact Deaf Australia (formerly known as the Australian Association of the Deaf (AAD)) had on my life. I still remember the day I received my voucher for a free Telephone Typewriter (TTY), the time that a true national relay service was launched, finally being able to watch the national news on television with captions, being able to visit the doctor with an interpreter, and even not needing to choose which mobile carrier I should use so I could be able to contact my friends using SMS! It is very difficult to believe that so much change has happened for deaf Australians in the last 30 years.

One another big change is the exposure and recognition of Auslan over recent times - we now have a deaf Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Mr Alastair McEwin. It can be said that he has also been part of the rich tapestry of the history of Deaf Australia, as he is a past President of a state branch organisation, Deaf Australia NSW. I personally feel very proud to see a fellow deaf person in such an esteemed position, and hope I will see more deaf people in strong leadership positions in the wider Australian community.

At the international level, Colin Allen was re-elected as the President of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD, which Deaf Australia is an Ordinary Member of), and has also been elected as the President of the International Disability Alliance (IDA). Colin developed his leadership potential during the early days of Deaf Australia, and was in fact instrumental in transforming Deaf Australia into a peak national advocacy organisation funded by the Federal Government.

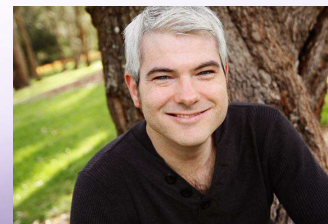
Speaking of deaf leaders, I would like to recognise and thank the past Presidents of AAD/Deaf Australia over the last 30 years for their leadership and contribution to the Australian deaf community - Dorothy Shaw, Colin Allen, Bobbie Blackson, Robert Adam, Ann Darwin and Kyle Miers. I feel very honoured to continue their legacy by *making an inclusive Australia for deaf people*.

I would also like to thank our voluntary Board Directors, Ida Rogers, Debbie Kennewell and Ramas McRae, for their wonderful, generous support. It can be difficult to manage Deaf Australia at times with a smaller Board, however I do have faith that we will continue to expand our Board and add new talent and leadership. I would like to thank our partners, supporters and members for their wonderful support, generous donations, and project opportunities.

Most importantly, I would like to thank our sponsors for the National Auslan Conference, particularly the Premium Sponsors - Auslan Services, Australian Communication Exchange and Deaf Children Australia. And I would like to give my heartfelt thanks to the NAC convenor Johanna Plante and the NAC Organising Committee, an outstanding group of volunteers who were committed to making our first National Auslan Conference a resounding success!



Todd Wright
Chairperson



Chief Executive's Report

As we celebrate Deaf Australia's 30th year with renewed energy and challenges, we also reflect on the 8 years since the Australian government ratified the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

One important milestone not yet achieved is the recognition of the right for deaf people to use Auslan.

Throughout the year, we have been represented the deaf community on a number of issues. We believe that these issues are not easily understood by non-deaf groups which adds significant demand on our capacity to ensure that our rights and needs are addressed.

However, there are many developments and activities that will position Auslan strongly in the community, including:

- Australian Curriculum has completed drafting the Auslan curriculum and is anticipating the start of a new national curriculum in 2017.
- 2016 Census questions were made available in Auslan.
- Deaf Jury: The High Court heard the case of Gaye Lyons v. State of Queensland; the International Human Rights Commission advised the NSW Government that they breached the human rights of two deaf persons by refusing to allow them to serve as jurors; and the Victorian Government is reviewing their Jury Act.
- "Keep NABS out of NDIS": an important issue of 'rights' vs. 'reasonable and necessary' support, we actively lobbied with the Department of Social Services to leave NABS alone resulting a small success as the Department of Social Services has agreed to temporary suspend the proposed transition of NABS while they conduct a comprehensive review of NABS.
- National Relay Service: proposing that the Video Relay Service provided by the National Relay Service to be uncapped and unlimited in our submission to Department of Communications on the Review of the National Relay Service.
- Emergency Announcement: we wrote a submission to the Department of Communication on the need for all Emergency Announcements to be Auslan interpreted.

We also lobbied on the right for access to information, which is a right for everyone including deaf and hard of hearing people, to be able to receive and impart information.

Deaf Australia wrote a submission to the Australian Communication and Media Authority to improve the quality of captioning on all TV channels and networks (including internet).

As the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is being rolled out across the country, we look forward with what NDIS will bring for deaf and hard of hearing people that will allow deaf and hard of hearing people the chance to actively participate in the community. Deaf Australia is currently working with NDIS to ensure that the deaf community is receiving information and provided the opportunity for active participation.

Last year, we started working with the National Transport Commission to amend its 'Assessing Fitness to Drive' Standard to allow greater flexibility for deaf people to obtain and retain their commercial driver's license. The standards have been approved by all state/ territory governments and will be in effect on 1 October 2016.

A joint collaboration with ASLIA in co-hosting the first ever National Auslan Conference is well underway. There are lots of work in organising the conference, and we would like to personally thank all volunteers and sponsors for making the conference happen.

We are enthusiastic about the upcoming World Deaf Youth Junior Camp and would like to acknowledge the organisers and Deaf Youth Australia for working hard in preparing the 'Best Ever' Junior Camp which will be held in April 2017.

Deaf Australia would like to express sincere appreciation for Drisana Levitzke-Gray, the 2015 Young Australian of the Year, for her tireless support in promoting Auslan to the wider community. Through Drisana, Deaf Australia received a higher number of donations. Thank you Drisana.

Lastly, I'd like to thank our volunteers and members for their support in the last 12 months, particularly in difficult times, in anticipation of renewed hope and a better future for Deaf Australians.



Kyle Miers
Chief Executive



Activities

Representations:

- World Federation of the Deaf – General Assembly (Turkey)
- NDIA CEO Forum
- Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO)
- Australian Consumers Communication Action Network (ACCAN)
- Australian Electoral Commission
- Australian Communication and Media Authority
- Department of Communications
- National Relay Service
- Australian Bureau of Statistics
- Australian Curriculum and Review Assessment Authority
- Macquarie University
- National Transport Commission
- Victorian Deaf Education Institution
- International Telecommunication Union

Submission/ Inquiries:

- Australian Government (Senate) – Hearing Services
- Australian Government (Education and Employment) Access to Education and Employment
- Australian Government: Department of Communications: Review of National Relay Service
- Australian Media and Communication Authority: Captioning Standards
- Australian Government: Department of Social Services: NABS and the NDIS.
- International Telecommunication Union (ITU): Access to Internet for Persons with Disabilities and Specific Needs.

Media/ Social Media

Media Releases:

- National Week of Deaf People
- Proposed revised 'Assessing Fitness to Drive' guidelines released.
- Announcing the National Auslan Conference
- Quality Caption for Deaf and Hard of Hearing – Not Important
- NSW Labor Party to establish Trial Auslan Branch
- Deaf Jury case goes to Canberra
- Keynote Speakers Announced
- Public Statement: Changing of Interpreter Fees and Structure by NABS

Interviews:

- ABC Brisbane (Radio): Gaye Lyons and Deaf Jury
- SBS (South Australia): Auslan at Klemzig Primary School
- Perth 6PR882 (Radio): National Week of Deaf People
- SBS World News: NABS and the NDIS
- ABC Brisbane: Gaye Lyons and Deaf Jury
- Fairfax Media: Workplace Discrimination

Facebook Accounts:

Deaf Australia (Main)
Jury Rights for All
National Auslan Conference

DeafAustraliaInc
Juryrightsforall
nationalauslanconference2016

Websites:

Deaf Australia (main)
Auslan Shop
Jury Rights for All
Deaf Friendly Scheme

www.deafaustralia.org.au
www.auslanshop.deafaustralia.org.au
www.juryrightsforall.org.au
www.deaf-friendly.org



DeafAustraliaInc

2014-15

1,894

2015-16

2,784

+47%

@deafaustralia

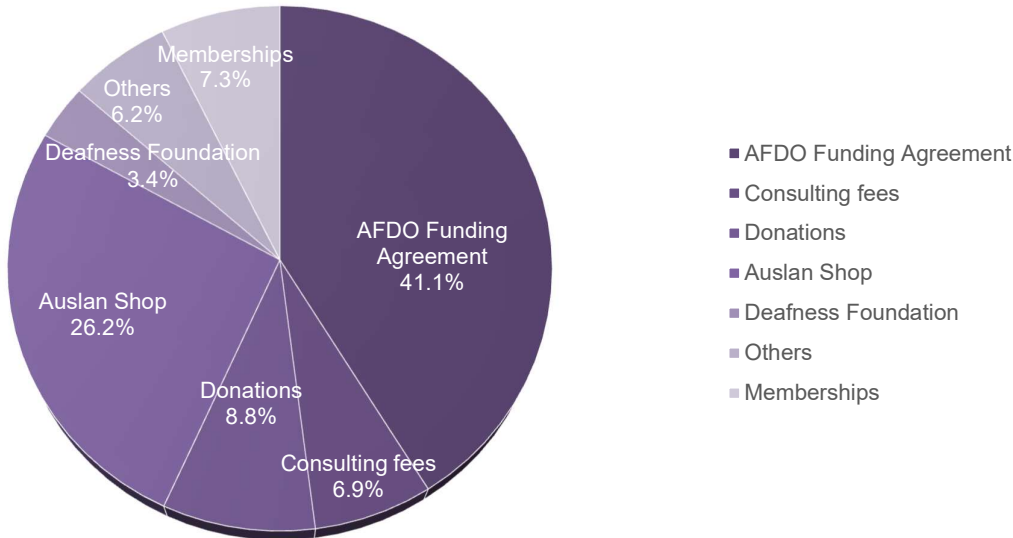
1,668

2,148

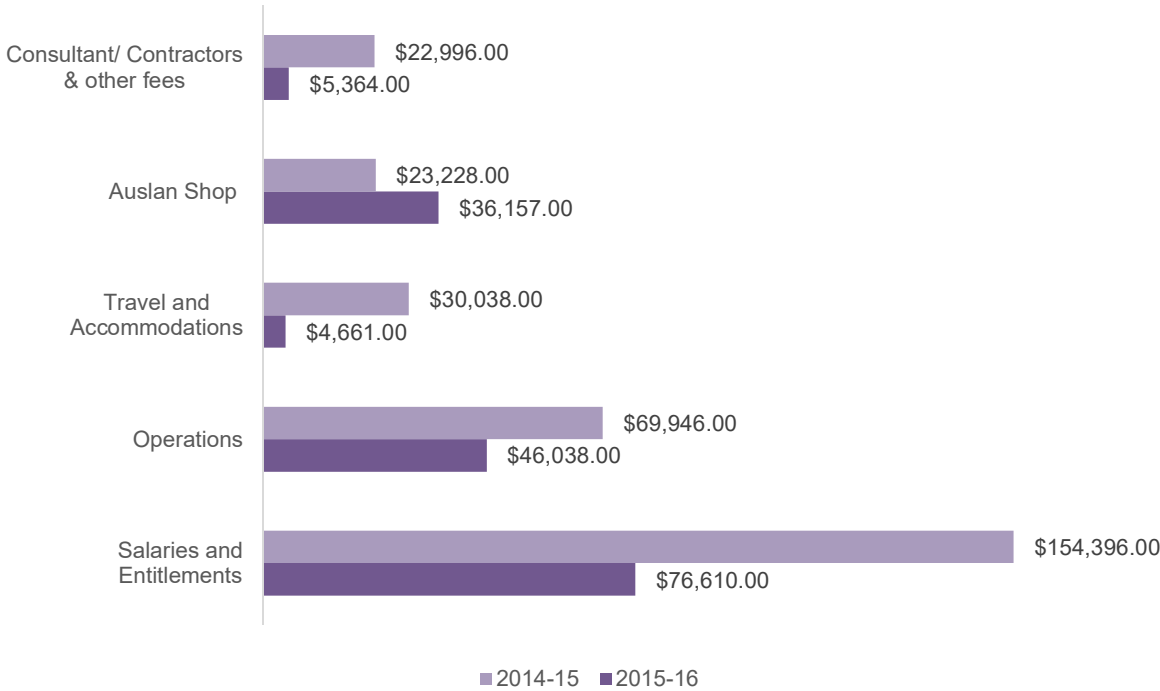
+28%

Financial Report

Income 2015-16 (\$145,873)



Expenses



Acknowledgements

2015 Deaf Australian of the Year - **David Parker**

2015 Young Deaf Australian of the Year - **Vanessa Vlakovic**

2015 Fair Go Award - **My Choice Matters**

Volunteers

Colin Allen
Suzanne Bradshaw
Breda Carty
Adrain Doyle
Ryan Gook
Debbie Kennewell
Katrina Lancaster-Maggs
Karen Lloyd
Rachel McKay
Kylie Nomchong
Ida Rogers
Susan Wright

Gavin Balharrie
Rachel Byrnes
Donovan Cresdee
Felicity Evans
Eve Hedley
Sarah Kennewell
Drisana Levitzke-Gray
John Loutitt
Ramas McRae
Kathryn O'Brien
John Wade

Wendy Boase
Helen Campbell
Ann Darwin
Shane Feldman
Paul Heuston
Damian Lacey
Alison Liebelt
Gaye Lyons
Rachel Miers
David Parker
Phillip Waters

Tony Bonfiglio
Colin Campbell
Barry Darwin
Ben Fogarty
Christian James
Vince Lam
Stephanie Linder
Maree Madden
Stephen Nicholson
Katrina Parker
Todd Wright

Past Board Members (* denotes President)

Founding Board Member

Breda Carty (2 years)
Merrill Cook (2 years)
Ken Donnell (2 years)
Bruce Muller (3 years)
*Dorothy Shaw (4 years)

20 Years

*Ann Darwin

15 Years

*Robert Adam

10 Years

*Kyle Miers

9 Years

*Colin Allen

8 Years

Karen Lloyd

7 Years

*Bobbie Blackson

Danni Wright

6 Years

Elaine Marcia

Carole Noonan

5 Years

Elaine Girke
Kimberly Pickering

4 Years

Carol-lee Aquiline
Brett Casey

Daniel Shanahan

John Wade

Ida Rogers

3 Years

Mac Adam

Anne Bremner

Eleanor Foster

Katrine Lancsaster

Kevin McKenzie

David Morgan

Philip Waters

Amy Watson

2 Years

Paul Bartlett

Kim Curtis

Peter Davies

David Hamilton

Irene Holub

Berna Hutchins

Patricia Levitzke-Gray

Carol O'Rilley

Brent Phillips

Freda Sandon

Barry Priori

1 Year

Julia Allen

Meg Augman

Peter Bailey

Rod Chapman

Cathy Clark

Margaret Grimes

Stephanie Linder

Gaye Lyons

Natalie Mundy

Gavin Rose-Mundy

Robyn Whitney

Alastair McEwin

Board Directors

Todd Wright (2009 -) – Chairperson
Debbie Kennewell (2015 -)
Ramas McRae (2015 -)
Ida Rogers – resigned

Staff

Kyle Miers – Chief Executive
Felicity Evans – Communications (contractor)
Tony Bonfiglio – Book keeper (contractor)
Alfia Dipalma – Book Keeper (current contractor)

Honorary Members

Robert Adam
Colin Allen
Breda Carty
Phil Harper
Ann Darwin
Janelle Ravlich
Kyle Miers
Karen Lloyd

Appreciation of support from Organisations

Auslan Connections
Auslan Services
Australia Curriculum
Australian Communication and Media Authority
Australian Communication Exchange
Australian Consumers Communication Action Network
Australian Deaf Blind Association
Australian Federation of Disability Organisations
Australian Human Rights Commission
Australian Sign Language Interpreter Association - National
Australian Sign Language Interpreter Association - Victoria
Commonwealth Bank
Communication Services of the Deaf
Conexu
Creative Minds Design
Deaf Can:Do
Deaf Children Australia
Deaf Community and Sports SA
Deaf Victoria
Deafness Foundation (Vic)

Department of Communications
Dick and Pip Smith Foundation
Disability Law Centre
Ephpheta Centre
John Pierce Centre
National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI)
National Auslan Booking and Payment Service (NABS)
National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)
National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA)
National Relay Service
National Transport Commission
Pacific Disability Forum
Subscription TV (ASTRA)
The Deaf Society
UBER Australia
Vicdeaf
Wesley Mission – Brisbane
WFD - Oceania
Word of Mouth
World Federation of the Deaf



National Auslan Conference
2016

National Auslan Conference 2016

Premium Sponsors



AuslanServices
a leading provider of Auslan interpreters



Deaf Children
Australia

Main Sponsors



National Accreditation Authority
for Translators and Interpreters Ltd



nabs
National Auslan Interpreter
Booking & Payment Service



Supporter Sponsors

Deaf Can:Do

National Relay Service

Communication Service
for the Deaf

Community Sponsors

Word of Mouth

Ephpheta Centre

Deaf Community
& Sports SA

John Pierce
Centre

Co-Hosted by:





DEAF YOUTH AUSTRALIA

Organisational Membership



WORLD FEDERATION OF THE DEAF



WFD-OCEANIA
World Federation of the Deaf - Regional Secretariat Oceania



Australian Federation of Disability Organisations

