



Deaf Australia 36th Annual Report 2021 - 2022

Advocacy and Information Organisation Report for 2021-2022.

A year full of success

deafaustalia.org.au

Acknowledgement of First Nations

Deaf Australia acknowledges that sovereignty was never ceded, and we acknowledge the traditional custodians of the many nations of Australia, and their strong connection to land, water and community.

Deaf Australia respects elders past and current, and extends this respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Deaf Australia acknowledges and respects Indigenous Sign Languages as a vital contribution to the rich diversity of languages all over Australia and supports its revitalisation.

**Scan QR code to
view Auslan Video**



Acknowledgement of Deaf People and the Community

Deaf Australia celebrates Auslan and recognise all Deaf leaders in Australia who have advocated for Deaf, Deafblind, and hard of hearing communities. We are proud of everyone's contribution, whether big or small, in preserving our language, community and culture.

**Scan QR code to
view Auslan Video**



Deaf Australia Incorporated

PO Box 31, Northcote Victoria, 3070

ABN: 65 174 780 885

For the year ended 30 June 2022

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About Us

Our Organisation

Deaf Australia is the Deaf-led peak organisation representing Deaf, Deafblind, and hard of hearing people in Australia who use Auslan.

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 UN (United Nations) Conventions and the National Disability Strategy.

Our Mission

Work towards realisation of Deaf person's linguistic and human rights in partnership with Australian Governments, national organisations, providers and relevant stakeholders.

Our Vision

Deaf people as fully engaged citizens.

Our Beliefs

Equality and Diversity

We are committed to promoting equality in our work. All individuals are to be treated equally and be included in our work regardless of their religion, race, gender, identity, sexual orientation, education, language, culture, age or disability.

Respect and Empowerment

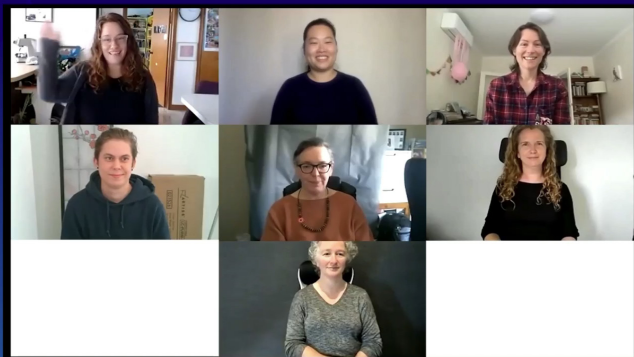
We will consult and work collaboratively with our members, partners and donors in achieving our goals.

Sign Language and Community

Language rights are essential for Deaf people's human rights; thus, sign language and Deaf communities must be legally recognised and promoted.

Leadership of Deaf People

Deaf organisations must be led by Deaf people, and decisions which affect Deaf people need to be made by Deaf people.



Our Guiding Principles

- The principles and objectives of the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other general acts and recommendations of the UN, and the Australian Governments will guide Deaf Australia's work.
- Deaf Australia operates in line with the philosophy of "Leave No One Behind", meaning equalisation of opportunities and full participation in society for Deaf people in the country.

Respect for Linguistic Diversity

- Deaf Australia works on an ongoing basis for the recognition of sign languages as part of linguistic diversity and aims to improve the status of Australian sign languages.

Inclusive and Accessible Society

- Deaf Australia believes no Deaf person should be denied quality education in their use of Auslan and that parents and providers of education should implement bilingual education for Deaf children.
- Deaf Australia works for an accessible society with no barriers where services and information are available in Auslan.

Leadership of Deaf People Principles

- Deaf Australia promotes the principle: "Nothing about us without us".
- Deaf Australia is committed to strengthening our capacity that will contribute to the autonomy, expertise and self-determination of Deaf communities.

Co-operation and Partnership

- Deaf Australia is committed to achieve our objectives through effective engagement with members, stakeholders, government agencies, donors and universities to successfully undertake its work.

Chairperson's Report - Debra Swann



Reflecting on the past year, my second year as chairperson - the first thing has come to my mind is journey.

Bringing Deaf Australia into the future is certainly a journey for our new Chief Executive, Jen Blyth and myself. The journey itself has brought challenges and changes and Deaf Australia had to transform to remain relevant within the current environment for us to continue to represent the Australian Deaf Community.

Over the last 12 months while still suffering the impact of COVID-19 – the staff of Deaf Australia, especially Jen Blyth, did not go unnoticed which includes the following:

- Staff and board retreat in Sydney in April 2022 including Special General Meeting. Community Consultation.
- Collaboration with Deaf Organisations.
- 'Three Terrific Things' digital newsletters for our members which includes CE updates
- The continuation to work on financial health into 2023.
- Developing rapport with organisations to provide Auspice and financial services.
- SBS Vodcasts to share 'Our Deaf Ways' – you can now see 6 episodes on our website.
- Expert letter: The Importance of Auslan for deaf families in NDIS plan.
- Position Statement: Preferred Auslan Interpreters.
- Continuing to grow our Auslan Shop.
- Many Advisory and representative meetings with number of organisations such as ADFO, NDIA.
- Promoting the Deaf Ecosystem
- Federal election update – partnership with Deaf Connect to make information available for the benefit of Deaf Community.



Several webinars, which can be viewed on our website

- **June 2022** – ‘Deaf Community Research - Be in it’ with Dr Gabrielle Hodge and Darlene Thornton
- **March 2022** – ‘Deaf History & Cultural Recognition Program’ with Dr Breda Carty and Darlene Thornton
- **October 2021** – ‘Being Deaf makes you a better and successful leader’ with Toby Burton
- **September 2021:** ‘Creative writing workshop’ with Kerrie Taylor
- ‘The Importance of healthy eating and nutrition’ with Ross Only-Zerkel (Deaf Chef Ross)
- ‘Digital Literacy’ with Ravi Vasavan

Over the coming years, we need to ensure that there is continued funding for your representation at all levels of government and all aspects in Australia. Without a united organisation, our ability to spotlight our needs at the community level will become fragmented and ineffective. It is important that we all work together to ensure we can continue to be fully inclusive of all members of our Australian deaf community.

I would like to acknowledge that as a Chairperson of Deaf Australia, I am only as strong as the Board itself, and I am grateful that I have had the privilege to be supported by our voluntary Board Directors, including those who have resigned earlier in the year due to other commitments - Natalie Sandon-Stanhope (VIC) (resigned February 2022), Ivan Callaghan

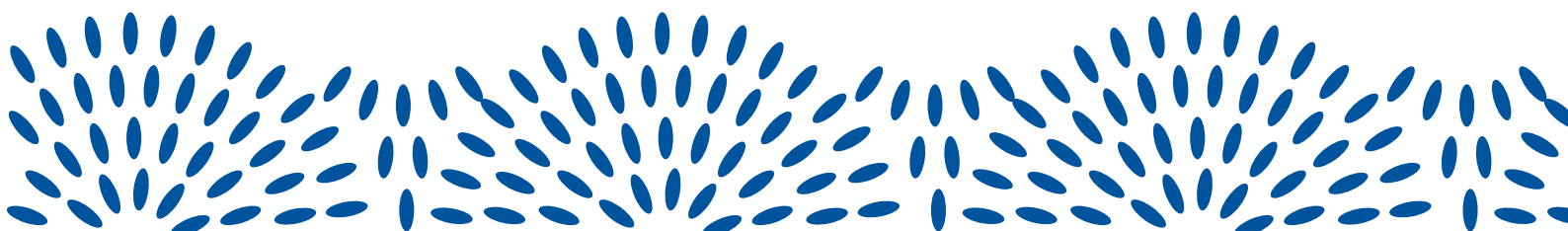
(QLD) (resigned April 2022) and Irene Holub (VIC) (resigned April 2022).

Our current Board is Debbie Kennewell (NT), Adrian Doyle (VIC) Lorraine Mulley (NSW), Brooke Pape (ACT). Both Debbie and Adrian will be stepping down at the AGM this year while Lorraine and Brooke will be nominated in for a 3-year term.

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 talents and leaderships.



Debra Swann
Chairperson



Chief Executive's Report - Jen Blyth



I am writing this report on Wurundjeri land, a beautiful place I am proud to call home, and a land that was never ceded. I want to pay my respects to Elders past and present and those who are reading this report.

In this report I will share with you a rundown of the past year, of our achievements and challenges and important milestones. I have been with Deaf Australia for just over a year now. In this time, we have grown our team to include 13 staff and consultants, all of whom I have been incredibly privileged to work with and learn from.

We all met face to face in Sydney for the first time in April. It was an excellent opportunity to share what was learnt at the fellowship and to re-emphasise our goals for Deaf Australia.

Three of our staff, including myself, were accepted into the autumn group Australian fellowship program with Australian Progress, starting in February and finishing in June. This fellowship focused on how to be more effective at campaigns, both at the individual and systemic level. It was a highly valuable opportunity in learning how to be more effective at advocacy.


We have focused on increasing Deaf Australia's profile more broadly and building partnerships with many organisations and people. We have delivered 6 webinars, focusing on the Deaf Ecosystem, covering topics such as the AFAC (Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council) disaster warning systems and our most popular

webinar being Deaf History and Cultural Recognition with Breda and Darlene in March this year. We also submitted reports to the DRC and were successful in advocating for a 'Deaf hearing' during Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability: Public hearing 29. We will have 2 full days for Deaf people to be eyewitnesses. This Hearing will also be Deaf-centric, so the hearing Commissioners and participants all get a taste of our world.

Our team have also delivered 6 workshops which included our ILC2 workshops in Sydney and Cairns, and an opportunity to submit to the Disability Royal Commission in Perth. We are also working towards a co-roadshow with Deaf Victoria and WAAD, which will take us across Australia in September and October 2022. Our eLearnings will soon be available on our website, covering diverse topics, which we are very excited to share.

Our website has been revamped and updated with positive feedback from the community. We have tried to make the website more visual and added new information including Deaf Australia's timeline from its birth to now.

We have also been working hard on developing an accessibility and inclusion toolkit. This



development can be used by public and private sectors with their services and products to ensure that they are accessible to Auslan Deaf users and other deaf people across Australia. This will also be available for Deaf, Deafblind and hard of hearing people and their families and friends for advocacy purposes.

These toolkits will inform users an understanding of Deaf, Deafblind and hard of hearing Auslan user's needs, and will support deaf people and families with deaf children, to ensure their deaf children can be involved in their communities and families on an equitable basis as their peers.

We have focused on advocating within the NDIS and AAT (Administrative Appeals Tribunal) and supported with individual advocacy cases. Our systemic advocacy included working in collaboration with Deaf Connect on the Per Capita report. This report provided research into the social and economic benefits of Auslan, exploring the benefits of early intervention approaches for deaf children, and the value of Auslan.

Deaf Australia has also been involved in extensive community consultations such as the health system and health care, interpreting services and offering the community an opportunity to have a Q&A with the CEO; all of which is part of or continued strategy to work with the community.

We revived the Dot Shaw Young Writers Competition and students from all around Australia sent in their stories, aligning with the 2021 theme 'A Thriving Deaf Community.' It was a success, and we are looking forward to reading this year's creative stories about superheroes.

We continue to support Deaf Youth Australia in reviewing its structure and processes and to aim to have a new board by end of this year. They have chosen four deaf children with two leaders to attend the 5th WFDYS (World Federation of the Deaf Youth Section) Children Camp in Colonia, Uruguay. We are so excited for these young representatives and cannot wait to follow their experiences in Uruguay.

This year has also had its share of roadblocks. We experienced challenges in timelines for delivering our eLearnings and had to reduce the number of topics we could deliver. We have ensured that all topics focus on advocacy skills development for you, our users.

We have learned that we need to be more intentional and proactive in working with and collaborating with First Nations people and in ensuring that Deaf Australia considers diversity throughout all aspects of our work. We are committed to doing better.

Additionally, at the time of writing this report, we still do not know if we will receive extra funding for 2023, which makes it hard to plan for the future.

I am honoured to work with the Deaf community in Australia, focusing on advocating for an equitable world where all Deaf, Deafblind and hard of hearing people, their friends and families and others who use Auslan as their language of preference. I look forward to another year of working with you all.

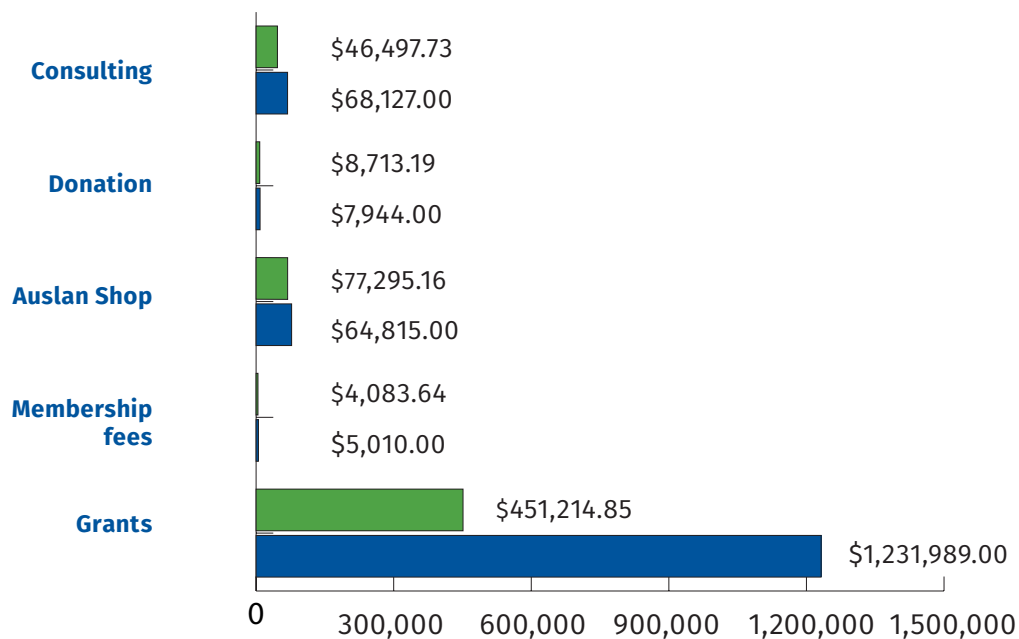
A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large 'J' and 'B' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line.

Jen Blyth
Chief Executive

Financial Report

Overview Financial	2020-2021	2021-2022
1. Grants	\$451,214.85	\$1,231,989.00
2. Membership fees	\$4,083.64	\$5,010.00
3. Auslan Shop	\$77,295.16	\$64,815.00
4. Donation	\$8,713.19	\$7,944.00
5. Consulting	\$46,497.73	\$68,127.00
6. Others	\$27,828.43	\$39,340.00

Income



TOTAL

(2020-2021) - \$615,633

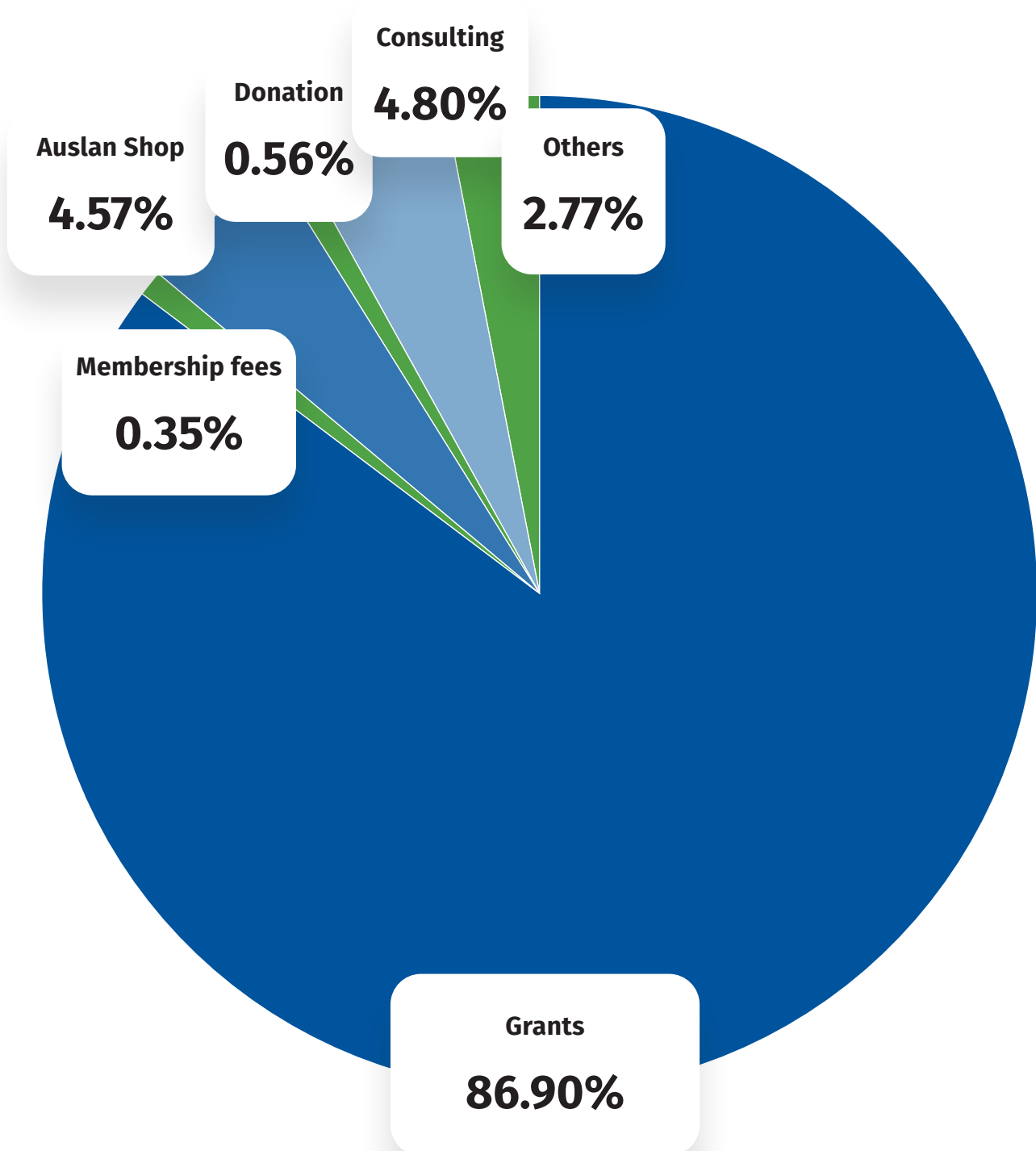


TOTAL

(2021-2022) - \$1,417,710

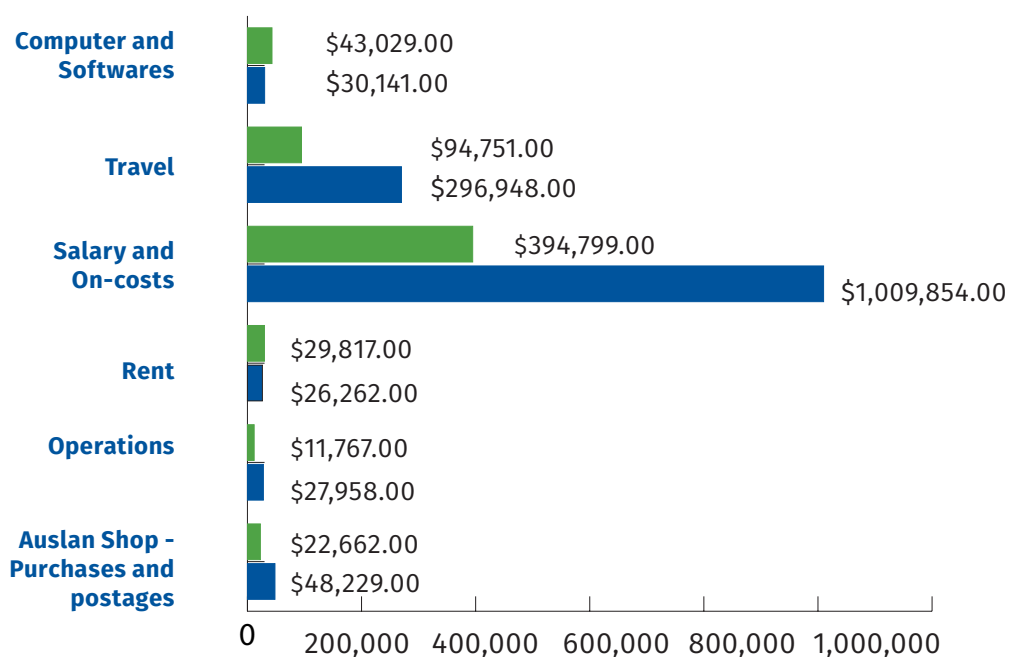


Source Income 2021-2022



Expenditure

Overview Financial	2020-2021	2021-2022
1. Auslan Shop - Purchases and postages	\$43,029.00	\$30,141.00
2. Operations	\$94,751.00	\$269,948.00
3. Salary and On-costs	\$394,799.00	\$1,009,854.00
4. Rent	\$29,817.00	\$26,262.00
5. Travel	\$11,767.00	\$27,958.00
6. Computer and Softwares	\$22,662.00	\$48,229.00



TOTAL
(2020-2021) - \$596,824



TOTAL
(2021-2022) - \$1,412,392





Board of Directors

Debra Swann | Chairperson

Adrian Doyle

Debbie Kennewell

Lorraine Mulley | Co-opted February 2022

Brooke Pape | Co-opted May 2022

Ivan Callaghan | Resigned April 2022

Natalie Sandon-Stanhope | Resigned Feb 2022

Irene Holub | Resigned April 2022

Staff

Jen Blyth | Chief Executive

Paula Thornton | Resource Officer

Salomon Gerber | Auslan Shop Officer

Rosalie Kassulke | Accountant

Shirley Liu | Community & Development Officer

Catherine Miller | Content Writer

Simon Andersson | Project Manager

Darlene Thornton | Resources Developer

June Stathis | Project Support Officer

Ipev Cav | Project Support Officer

Edan Chapman | Disability Royal Commission (Deaf) Advocacy Support

Honorary Life Members

Dr. Robert Adam

Dr. Philip Harper

Mr. Kyle Miers

Dr. Colin Allen, AM

Ms. Karen Lloyd, AM

Ms. Janelle Ravlich

Dr. Breda Carty, AO

Mr. Alastair McEwin, AM

Mr. Todd Wright

Ms. Ann Darwin (in memory)

Past Board Members (*denotes President)

Founding Board Member

Breda Carty, AO (2 years)

Merrill Cook (2 years)

Ken Donnell (2 years)

Bruce Muller (3 years)

*Dorothy (Dot) Shaw (4 years)

20 years

*Ann Darwin

15 years

*Robert Adam

10 years

*Kyle Miers

9 years

*Colin Allen, AM

*Todd Wright

7 years

*Bobbie Blackson

Danni Wright

6 years

Marcia Girke-Boyle

Carole Noonan

5 years

Elaine Girke

Debbie Kennewell

Kimberly Pickering

4 years

Adrian Doyle

Ida Rogers

Daniel Shanahan

John Wade

3 years

Mac Adam

Rodney Adams

Anne Bremner, AM

Eleanor Foster

Katrina Lancaster-Maggs

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

Alastair McEwin, AM

Ramas McRae

Rachel Miers

Carol O'Riley

Brent Phillips

Barry Priori

Freda Sandon

*Debra Swann

1 year

Julia Allen

Meg Aumann

Peter Bailey

Rod Chapman

Cathy Clark

Margaret Grimes

Stephanie Linder

Gaye Lyons

Natalie Sandon-Stanhope

Miranda Reardon

Gavin Rose-Mundy

Robyn Whitney

Memberships



WORLD FEDERATION OF THE DEAF



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



Pacific
Disability
Forum



**For public enquiries about
Deaf Australia Annual Report**

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