

# Australian Federation of Disability Organisations



Annual report 2019 – 2020



Australian Federation of  
Disability Organisations

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## Acronyms used in this report

**ADDC**

Australian Disability  
Development Consortium

**AFDO**

Australian Federation of  
Disability Organisations

**AGM**

Annual General Meeting

**CoSP**

Conference of States Parties

**BIDS**

Business Inclusion  
& Diversity Services

**DES**

Disability Employment Service

**DSS**

Department of Social Services

**DPI**

Disabled Persons International

**DPO**

Disabled Peoples Organisation

**DRO**

Disability Representative  
Organisation

**GST**

Goods and Services Tax

**IDA**

International Disability Alliance

**NDIA**

National Disability Insurance  
Agency

**NDIS**

National Disability Insurance  
Scheme

**NGO**

Non Government Organisation

**P2E**

Passport 2 Employment

**UNCRPD**

United Nations Convention  
on the Rights of Persons  
with Disabilities

AFDO acknowledges people with disability living in institutional settings and in the community across Australia, who have suffered or are suffering from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

AFDO also proudly acknowledges Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and their rich culture and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's first peoples and as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and water on which we rely.



**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this report may contain images of people who have passed away.**

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# About Us and Our Members

The Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO) is a Disabled People's Organisation (DPO) and the national voice representing people with disability in Australia.

To achieve our mission and vision, we provide policy advice and representation to government and organisations on matters that impact the lives of people with disability. We also inform and educate the general community about disability and we work to develop a community where people with disability can participate in all aspects of social, economic, political and cultural life. This includes genuine participation in mainstream community life, the development of respectful and valued relationships, social and economic participation, and the opportunity to contribute as valued citizens.

## Our vision

That all people with disabilities must be involved equally in all aspects of social, economic, political and cultural life.

## Our mission

Using the strength of our membership-based organisations to harness the collective power of uniting people with disability to change society into a community where everyone is equal.



## Our strategic objectives

To represent the united voice of our members and people with disability in national initiatives and policy debate.

To enhance the profile, respect and reputation for AFDO through our members.

To build the capacity and sustainability of AFDO and our members.

To foster strong collaboration and engagement between our members and stakeholders.

To enhance AFDO's connection and influence in international disability initiatives, particularly in the Asia Pacific region, through policy, advocacy and engagement.





## Our members

AFDO is made up of member organisations who work together to contribute to the national policy agenda and address issues that impact the lives of people with disability in Australia. We understand that disability specific organisations play a key role in the provision of information and peer support to people with disability and their families. This role keeps them closely connected to their grass roots communities.

Each community has its peak or other representative organisations that uses its voice to advocate on issues.

AFDO is the forum where these views are collected and co-ordinated to ensure Government is across issues impacting all people with disability in Australia.

We are proud to be the organisation that has brought together both cross-disability organisations (representing the interests of people with all kinds of disability), and disability-specific organisations/peaks. We understand that cross-disability groups are only successful when they have access to the specific expertise of disability-specific organisations, as these disability-specific groups are connected to their communities.

We understand that it is imperative that neither the voice of cross-disability groups or disability-specific groups is silenced in favour of the other.

### Full members

Autism Aspergers Advocacy Australia	Disability Justice Australia	Physical Disability Australia
Blind Citizens Australia	Disability Resources Centre	Polio Australia
Brain Injury Australia	Down Syndrome Australia	Women with Disabilities ACT
Deaf Australia	Enhanced Lifestyles	Women with Disabilities Victoria
Deafblind Australia	National Mental Health Consumer & Carer Forum	
Deafness Forum of Australia	People with Disabilities ACT	
Disability Advocacy Network Australia	People with Disabilities WA	

### Associate members

AED Legal Centre	Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia	National Organisation for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
Aspergers Victoria	Leadership Plus	Youth Disability Advocacy Service

## Full members



## Associate members



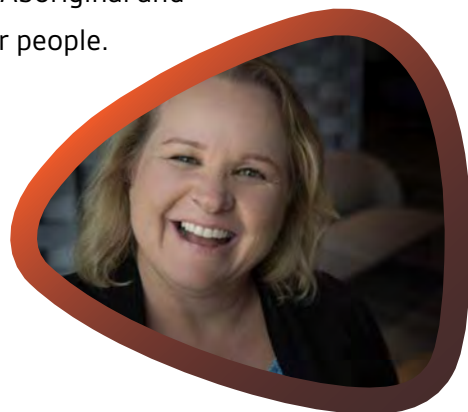
# Inclusion Statement

## Our commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

The Australian Federation of Disability Organisations recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of this continent and the islands of the Torres Strait. In doing so, we acknowledge the importance of connection to and access to country for Australia's First Peoples and recognise our shared history that has had a devastating impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities.

We acknowledge and respect the distinct Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural differences, beliefs, values and languages.

Through working together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, AFDO will develop respectful and meaningful partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations, and partnership development that is respectful and sustainable with long-term vision will be critical in meeting our commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



## Jody Barney – AFDO Cultural Consultant

Jody Barney is a Birri Gubba / Urangan woman from Queensland who lives on Yorta Yorta Country since 1999. Jody works as a Deaf Indigenous Community Consultant and has been working with AFDO since 2007 on various projects surrounding the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disabilities. Jody is currently an Atlantic Fellow at Melbourne University.

Jody has supported the Policy Team to undertake work on connecting AFDO with Indigenous Australians with disability and their communities across Australia.

Jody's work with the Team has produced the following key outcomes:

- Development of the Indigenous Engagement Strategy
- Representation of Indigenous Voices with Disability at Disability Events
- High level cultural advice regarding AFDO's Submissions and Policy Development
- Cultural Vouching for access to Indigenous Australians with disability and their communities
- AFDO Intermediary between Indigenous people with disability and other disability advocacy agencies and service providers







The Nugget  
Artist: Robert Croft

## About the Award and the Artist

Nugget is a noun and can mean either a small lump of gold or other precious metal found ready-formed in the earth or a valuable idea or fact - "a nugget of wisdom"

For 2019, the Victorian Public Advocate, Colleen Pearce recognised in her annual award, the outstanding achievements of the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO), in effecting positive change through strong advocacy for the rights of people with disability over its operation since inception.

The Public Advocate also awarded AFDO a work by Aboriginal artist Robert Croft. Robert works at the ArtGusto Studio 2 days a week. This is a safe and supported environment where Robert is given the opportunity to independently go about his day working on his art at his own pace - "which by the way is furious!" He makes his own artistic decisions, which is very much about the process - "we are just here to facilitate."

Robert is non-verbal and vision impaired but through his art and acting has found a way to communicate and be a valuable, contributing member of the community.

# President & CEO Report

We are pleased to present our joint report covering AFDO's achievements over the 2019 – 2020 financial year that has been filled with many issues and been one of significance for people with disability, their families and supporters.

Not just due to the significant impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic, which continues as at the date of writing this report, but also for the operation of the Disability Royal Commission, changes to the National Disability Insurance Scheme, the development of a new National Disability Strategy for 2020 onwards and a raft of policy and systemic advocacy work undertaken by AFDO and all of our members.

It has been another productive year for the Board with continued positive results for our organisation and all our members. The AFDO Board, Management and our Team acknowledge the importance of maintaining a supportive and collaborative organisational culture, with strong and respectful partnerships in delivering services for and with our members and community.

We continue our commitment, leading an organisation recognising that positive behaviours and values are equally as important as results.

The more significant highlights over this year are outlined below;

- The AFDO Advocates Forum with its theme, “Young Up and Coming Advocates” with over 110 people in attendance, including our members, people with disability and others from the wider community. Key Note Speaker Senator Jordon Steele-John presented along with a range of experienced sector speakers on the importance of advocacy and issues in its continuing role
- Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic impacts and ensuring strong advocacy for the inclusion, accountability and upholding of the rights of people with disability in all policy contexts and consideration by Federal, State, Territory with all governments and support services/systems



- AFDO completing 2019 as the Victorian Public Advocates Awardee for our continued service in improving lives and opportunities for people with disability
- Continuing engagement with the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability, with AFDO and our national peak members receiving funding for the important work to be undertaken in informing and supporting people with disability to understand its function and present to the DRC
- Continuing strong Federal Government interaction with the Minister for Families and Social Services, Senator the Hon Anne Ruston and the Minister for NDIS, the Hon Stuart Robert, covering the Disability Sector particularly over proposed changes to the NDIS, operation of the Disability Royal Commission, employment of people with disability, Disability Support Pension issues and more
- Federal Budget delayed until October 2020, due to COVID-19 impacts, AFDO had made its Federal Budget Submission earlier in the year and now had to deal with implications of ATO one-off cash flow boost, JobKeeper, JobSeeker, two fixed payments for those on Disability Support Pension and provide advice to members on impacts for organisations and for people with disability and their families
- Continuing review of the National Disability Strategy, first plan ending in 2020 and the next for 2021 to 2030. Strong advocacy by AFDO to ensure that the next plan delivers outcomes, is funded to implement actions at all levels of government with progress and outcomes reported by all levels on a regular basis. Working along with DANA to ensure that specific consultation workshops are held for the advocacy sector on the NDS. This has been reflected to date in the DSS NDS Position Paper and in workshops agreed by DSS to be held later this year. We will continue working with our members to ensure a strong strategy is delivered

We continued our Member Forums over the year and switched to remote video conference during the pandemic. These provided an opportunity for all members to participate and engage as well as undertake a range of training on specific areas in response to member requests. The member training we undertook over the year included;

- From Sustainable Thinking to Action - Workshop by Spark Strategy
- PIAC Report on a Fairer NDIS – Session + Q & A - by Public Interest Advocacy Centre
- Strategically Engaging & Influencing Government – Workshop by 89 Degrees East
- Influencing Government Legislation – Workshop by 89 Degrees East

AFDO staff continued to work strongly on our systemic advocacy, projects, governance support and operations for the organisation and ensure that our member issues were advanced at every opportunity with the Federal Government, relevant Ministers, as well as key government departments, Shadow Ministry and cross-benchers.

Director Trevor Carroll, as our International Coordinator, continued strong engagement and reported back on progress with Disabled Peoples International and the Pacific Disability Forum. Owing to the pandemic, unfortunately the Council of State Parties (CoSP) at the United Nations in New York, had to be postponed until late 2020 or possibly 2021. Thank you Trevor for your continuing work in this important space, much appreciated.

As President, I would extend my sincere thanks to my fellow Board members, past and present, Ross, our CEO, all the AFDO Team and the volunteers for their unrestrained contribution and professionalism which we all bring to further the work of AFDO and our members. I must also thank the members of the AFDO Board Executive; Trevor, Janine and Christine, who meet regularly between the Board meetings with myself, to monitor the work and performance of the organisation.

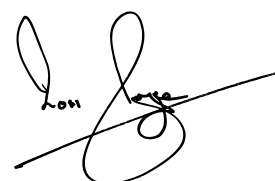
As CEO, I'd like to thank our President, Liz, and our committed and passionate Board for their contribution, support, knowledge and encouragement, particularly over the COVID-19 period. To our Board, our Members and all our AFDO Team, I want to thank each and every one of you for contributing to a successful year for all of us, our sector and our communities. It continues to be my pleasure to work with you for the benefit of people with disability, their families and supporters.

AFDO has continued to grow not only its membership, but also its standing and organisation achievements and always in partnership with our members, in keeping with our Vision and Mission.

The year ahead is going to be even more challenging and at this stage, somewhat of an unknown, however we look forward to continuing our strong engagement, advocacy and support, working with all in the sector for our communities.



Liz Reid AM  
**President**



Ross Joyce  
**CEO**

# Our Sector Voice

AFDO has been proactive in furthering the voice of people with disability over the past twelve months through our engagement with the National Disability Insurance Agency, Australian Government, national peak bodies, and by participating on committees and working groups.

## International representation

Australian Disability and Development Consortium (ADDC)

Disabled People's International (DPI)

International Disability Alliance (IDA)

International Initiative for Disability Leadership (IIDL)

Pacific Disability Forum (PDF)

United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

## Australian representation

Assistive Technology for All (ATFA)

Aviation Access Forum

Victorian Government - NDIS Implementation Taskforce Working Groups

- NDIS ITF Participant Needs and Mainstream Interface Working Group
- NDIS ITF Market Readiness Working Group

Australian Electoral Commission Disability Advisory Committee

NDIA CEO Forum

Disability Support IRC

Disability Gateway Reference Group

Not for profit Stewardship Group Australian Taxation Office

DSS National Disability Strategy Reform Steering Group

State Trustees - Ageing, Disability and Mental Health Collaborative Panel – Victorian agencies



## Australian representation (continued)

Innovative Workforce Fund – Independent Advisory Group (IAG)  
NDIA Independent Advisory Council (IAC)  
National Inclusive Transport Advocacy Network (NITAN)  
Australian Public Service Commission Disability Employment Working Group  
NDIS Transitioning Project (NDIS TSP)  
Services Australia Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG)  
Melbourne Social Equity Institute Advisory Board  
Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS)  
National Assistive Technology Alliance  
Reducing Stigma and Discrimination Working Group  
UNSW School of Business / Centre for Research Excellence in Disability and Health  
VicRoads Disability Parking Permit Eligibility Reference Group  
Civil Society UNCRPD Shadow Working Group  
Victorian NDIS Planning Advisory Group  
Services Australia Disability Peaks DSP Working Group  
University of Western Sydney Culturally & Linguistically Diverse People with  
Disability Access to Digital Technology Group  
Technical Experts Social Security (TESS) Working Group

## National peak bodies engagement

National Disability and Carer Alliance  
Mental Health Australia  
Carers Australia  
National Disability Services (NDS)  
Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS)  
Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN)  
People with Disability Australia (PWDA)  
First Peoples Disability Network Australia (FPDN)  
Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA)  
National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA)  
Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA)

# Our Board

## Liz Reid AM

### President

#### Nominated by Physical Disability Australia



Liz was awarded the Member of the Order of Australia (AM) Medal in 2020, for service to people with disability, youth and social inclusion.

Liz has over 30 years' experience in the community, disability, and social justice sectors. She has dedicated her career to assisting others to seek equitable economic and social opportunities to participate fully in their communities.

Liz has a physical disability, Arthrogryposis multiplex congenita (AMC) and has had extensive surgery since birth to achieve improved positioning and increase the range of motion in her lower limbs/joints for better mobility. In her mid-twenties she was diagnosed with Ankylosing spondylitis, a type of arthritis and a chronic inflammatory disease requiring her to use a wheelchair to conserve energy to do the fun things in life!

Currently, Liz is the Executive Officer of YouthWorX NT, a not for profit organisation committed to supporting Territorians in their lifelong social, economic and career success. She is responsible for the management of programs that include life and career coaching, and services that support employment.

Liz is the current President of Physical Disability Australia (PDA); the PDA representative on the AFDO Board; member of the City of Darwin Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee and a member of the National Disability Insurance Agency Independent Advisory Council.

## Trevor Carroll

### Vice President

#### & International Co-ordinator

#### Nominated by Disability Justice Australia



Trevor is passionate about protecting and enhancing the human rights of people with disabilities.

Trevor is the CEO at Disability Justice Australia (DJA) and he represents AFDO as an elected Director and Information Officer on the Board of Disabled Peoples International (DPI), as the Chair of the DPI Asia-Pacific Region, member of the Pacific Disability Forum (PDF), member of the Australian Electoral Commission Disability Advisory Committee; and on the Executive of the Australian Disability and Development Consortium (ADDC).

Trevor acquired an incomplete spinal cord injury in the mid 1990's and has since acquired bi-lateral sensorineural hearing loss and Meniere's disease.

He wears many other hats including:

- Secretary and a founding member of the Friends of South Morang
- Director on the Board of Social Security Rights Victoria
- Australia Day Ambassador
- Trustee of an ASIC regulated superannuation fund
- Co-chair of the Victoria Police Disability Portfolio Reference Group
- Volunteer mentor with the Australian Quadriplegics Association; and is a
- Regular member of the judging panel for the annual Victorian Disability Awards.



## **Janine Neu**

### **Vice President**

#### **Nominated by People with Disabilities WA**

Janine is passionate about maximising opportunities for people with disability as well as supporting individual and systemic advocacy.

She is Vice Chairperson of People with Disabilities WA and is a committee member of ACROD and Companion Card External Appeals in WA.

Janine was 35 weeks pregnant when she experienced sudden onset of Acute Transverse Myelitis in 1996, rendering her quadriplegic. Following the birth of her son and 6 months of hospital rehabilitation, she returned home to her family to challenge the WA Government for essential funding to enable her family to stay together.

Following receipt of permanent funding, Janine could continue to lead her life in her community.

Janine has personally focused on health and physical rehabilitation since hospital discharge whilst navigating an opaque, complex and compartmentalized system of services for people with disabilities. Staying healthy and active has resulted in Janine continuing to achieve functional improvement.



## **Christine Hunter**

### **Treasurer**

#### **Nominated by Deafness Forum of Australia**

Christine is President of Hearing Matters Australia (HMA), a volunteer-based hearing support organisation for people with hearing loss, and she represents Deafness Forum on the AFDO Board. Christine has lived with hearing loss since early childhood but following intervention was able to train and work as a secondary school educator for 22 years, before retiring in 2012.

In her role as HMA President, Christine actively promotes the twin missions of Hearing Matters Australia & Deafness Forum through advocacy, advice and support to members and others who seek assistance to best manage hearing loss. Her advocacy activities have included representations to Australian federal & state government agencies and active participation on the Transport for NSW Accessible Transport Committee (ATAC). Her objective in these forums is to have hearing health recognised as a priority health issue and to promote equitable access for people with hearing loss. Her involvement is focused on drawing attention to the many hearing loss issues and barriers confronting those attempting to access services.

Christine also collaborates globally with hearing industry professionals, academics & consumer representatives with the aim of strengthening the quality of hearing care and promoting an international hearing care model focused on the needs of the individual.



## Mary Henley-Collopy

### Director

#### Nominated by Disability Resources Centre

Mary is currently the Chairperson of Disability Resources Centre in Victoria and joined the Board of AFDO in late 2019.

She has over 30 years' experience working as a Social Worker in both the public and private sectors.

Mary has a Bachelor of Social Work; Bereavement Counselling qualifications; Certificate in Critical Incidents and Stress Management and, a Certificate IV in Workplace Assessment and Training.

Mary was born with a permanent disability stemming from Thalidomide damage - resulting in four limb foreshortening.



## Nick Rushworth

### Director

#### Nominated by Brain Injury Australia

Nick has been Executive Officer of Brain Injury Australia since 2008. He was also President of the Brain Injury Association of New South Wales between 2004 and 2008.

In 1996, Nick sustained a severe traumatic brain injury as a result of a bicycle accident. Before joining Brain Injury Australia, Nick worked for the Northern Territory Government setting up their new Office of Disability.

Nick has a journalist background and has won a number of awards, including a Silver World Medal at the New York Festival, a National Press Club and TV Week Logie Award.

He was formerly a producer with the Nine Television Network's "Sunday" program and ABC Radio National.



## Debbie Kennewell

### Director

#### Nominated by Deaf Australia

Debbie is an Auslan user and has previously served on the boards of Deaf Australia, Deaf Community and Sports SA.

She is currently studying for a Bachelor in Special Education (Early Childhood)/Disability Studies at Flinders University.

Debbie was born Deaf into a Deaf family which includes both parents being deaf. She primarily uses Auslan (Australian Sign Language), the language of the Deaf community in Australia.

Debbie currently represents AFDO on the Aviation Access Forum (AAF) and has worked on multiple national projects developing guidelines, resources, and training for stakeholders of the Deaf community.

Debbie also has an interest in raising disability issues including the promotion of the Australian Deaf community.



## Felicity Crowther

### Director

#### Nominated by Inclusion Australia

Felicity is the Executive Director of the South Australian Council on Intellectual Disability (SACID), an organisation who works towards achieving a community inclusive of people with intellectual disability.

She is a qualified Developmental Educator having completed a Bachelor of Disability and Community Rehabilitation with Honours.

Since completing her studies Felicity has worked in a range of positions in the disability sector including service development, project management and service management roles.

Felicity is passionate about supporting people with intellectual disability to have a voice within their community. In both a professional and voluntary capacity.

She has assisted with the development of self-advocacy programs and supported individual people with intellectual disability in their self-advocacy roles.

This passion for supporting people with intellectual disability has led Felicity to undertake a PhD in the area of inclusive research.





## John Simpson AM

### Director

#### Nominated by Blind Citizens Australia

On Australia Day 2020 John was honoured with the Award of Member (AM) in the Order of Australia "for significant service to people who are blind or have low vision".

John's career has included appointments as Executive Officer with Blind Citizens Australia and later RPH Australia; National Program Manager for the Lions Eye Health Program; and five years as National Manager within Vision Australia's Accessible Information Solutions Division where he managed the Audio Description Service, Vision Australia Radio and the Division's broader operations at various times.

Alongside these appointments and his ongoing Directorship with Information Alternatives, John has undertaken many research and project management assignments to address the information needs of people with a print disability.

John is currently the:

- President, Blind Citizens Australia
- Chair, Independence and Participation Policy Committee, Vision 2020 Australia
- Director, Information Alternatives



## Belinda O'Connor

### Director

#### Nominated by Women with Disabilities ACT

For the past 17 years Belinda has worked in various portfolios across the Australian Government, currently in public policy.

She is passionate about improving disability workforce participation and inclusive practices, including through universal design and assistive technology. During this time, Belinda has been actively involved in disability networks.

Born with vision impairment, Belinda has forged a life of ongoing growth in personal self-advocacy as a person with disability and for people with disability.

In 2017 Belinda founded Bioptic Drivers Australia and is working with a multi-disciplinary team to formalise bioptic driving in Australia. Belinda is a Director of Women with Disabilities ACT (WWDACT), and has a growing interest in the intersectional challenges facing women with disability.

Belinda is keen to work with other strong women to advance human rights and inclusion for women with disability.

## **Richard Dent**

### **Director**

#### **Independent Director**



Richard was appointed by the Board for his governance and leadership expertise.

He is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and has been active in the disability field for more than 25 years.

He contributed to the leadership of the NDIS campaign, and he has held CEO, Executive and Board member roles within UnitingCare, the E W Tipping Foundation, National Disability Services, and multiple other organisations.

Richard has been active in Australia's civic life for more than two decades, most recently as Leadership Victoria's Chief Executive Officer. He is a specialist international consultant in leadership, strategy and NFP governance and has advised governments and contributed to public policy through VCOSS and other peak bodies.

Richard's contributions have included making progress on economic wellbeing, fostering social fairness, maintaining a sustainable environment and upholding human rights, with a particular focus on rights of people with disability.



# Our Team

## **Ross Joyce**

Chief Executive Officer

## **Helen Cameron**

Personal & Executive Assistant  
to Ross Joyce

## **Patrick McGee**

National Manager – Policy,  
Advocacy & Research

## **Jim Valavanis**

Manager – Business  
Development & Engagement

## **Cheryl Gratton**

Governance Co-ordinator  
& Communications

## **Ramona Mandy**

NDIS & Special Projects Officer

## **Leah Penny**

Co-ordinator – Disability  
Projects & BIDS

## **Steve Schreck**

Co-ordinator – Disability  
Projects & BIDS

## **Natalie Wade**

AFDO Expert Advisor –  
Disability Royal Commission

## **Jody Barney**

AFDO Cultural Advisor

## **Geoff Trappett OAM**

National Inclusive Transport  
Advocacy Network (NITAN)  
Chairperson

## **Sandra Quinlan**

Remote Working & COVID-19  
Organisational Support  
Consultant

## **Natasha Thomson**

AFDO Social Security  
Consultant – Technical Experts  
Social Security (TESS)  
Working Group

## **Nunzio Giunta**

Chief Financial Officer

## **Ian Scarborough**

Accountant CPA

## **Malcolm Godber**

Accountant CPA



# Policy & Advocacy

The last twelve months have not been what we were all expecting and the impact of the COVID-19 is still unfolding. Around the world governments have failed people with disability (PWD) during the pandemic. AFDO have continued working to ensure that PWD are prioritised during the pandemic, working with other peak disability organisations on various campaigns, including to establish a Disability Task-force to provide advice to the Chief Medical Officer about the needs of PWD during the pandemic; making sure that all guidelines about triage or management of COVID-19 ensure that people with disability have equal access to health care, including ICU and other intensive treatments; working with Government and the NDIA to ensure continuity of supports.

People with disability are adaptable and resilient, they have managed the unexpected disruption to their lives incredibly well, even though they have had to continue to campaign well into the pandemic for their needs to be considered by decision-makers.

## Advocacy & Policy 2020

AFDO continued the work of disability advocacy during the pandemic; however, by the end of March, the 2020 Program was redesigned to accommodate responding to COVID-19. Whilst responding to the pandemic dominated the work of AFDO and the Policy, Advocacy & Research Team, we were also able to continue to focus on the existing priority areas:

1. Responding to COVID-19
2. Involving AFDO in the Disability Royal Commission (now the DRC)
3. The National Disability Insurance Scheme
4. The Intersectionality of Justice and Disability
5. Economic Participation
6. Transport Advocacy

## Participation and Representation Model

A central theme for our policy, advocacy & research work was greater representation and participation by people with disability in that work. People with disability needed to be partners in all aspects of the work being undertaken by the Team in their name.

Three key principles ensure this model responds:

1. Valuing of lived experience as expertise
2. People with disability must lead the work
3. People with disability must be paid for the work

As a result of this and with limited resources to engage any additional staff, people with disability were recruited as Expert Consultants to provide the Policy, Advocacy & Research Team with advice and leadership. Our progress on this model is demonstrated as follows;



## National Inclusive Transport Advocacy Network

Geoff Trappett OAM, our AFDO Expert Advisor on Transport and as the Independent Chair of the AFDO initiated, National Inclusive Transport Advocacy Network (NITAN). Geoff leads the work of transport advocacy supported by AFDO.

Over the last twelve months, he organised the national network, including developing representation from all states/territories, built network member consensus on decision making and representing NITAN in public as required. The leadership Geoff provides as Chair has seen a more independent NITAN emerge and take shape.

A Key Outcome for NITAN included:

- Representing NITAN and AFDO in the Modernisation of the National Transport Standards Project led by the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Transport

## AFDO Cultural Advisor

Jody Barney continues her role as our expert on Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander cultural considerations and connection. More about Jody can be found in the earlier section of the Report under the Inclusion Statement.

## AFDO Expert Advisor on Social Security & DSP

Natasha Thomson is the AFDO Expert Advisor on Social Security & Disability Support Pension. Along with representatives of Western Sydney University, Disability Resources Centre, Victoria Legal Aid and Social Security Rights Victoria, they form the AFDO Technical Experts on Social Security Working Group.

Key Outcomes of this work include:

- Commissioning Report: Inequalities in Standards of Living: Evidence for Improved Income Support for People with Disability - launched at Parliament House Canberra in October 2019
- Systemic Advocacy with Minister Ruston's Office during COVID-19 ceasing mutual obligations and activity testing
- Development of three National Online Workshops on the Future of Social Security for People with Disability

## AFDO Expert Advisor on the DRC

Natalie Wade was appointed as AFDO's Expert Advisor to assist AFDO and its members. More details about Natalie can be found under the Disability Royal Commission section.



## Advocacy for Disability Royal Commission

The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission) is a national inquiry examining the lived experience of violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation of all people with disability in Australia. Through this inquiry, the Disability Royal Commission will look into:

- preventing and better-protecting people with disability from experiencing violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation
- achieving best practice in reporting, investigating and responding to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disability
- promoting a more inclusive society that supports people with disability to be independent and live free from violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation

The Disability Royal Commission started in April 2019 and will provide a report to the Australian Government in April 2022. The Disability Royal Commission will conduct its inquiry in accordance with the [Terms of Reference](#).

### AFDO Expert Advisor - DRC

AFDO appointed Natalie Wade as AFDO's Expert Advisor on the Disability Royal Commission. Natalie is the Founder and Principal Lawyer of Equality Lawyers, a law firm which provides everyday legal services to people with disability, their families and supporters.

Prior to founding Equality Lawyers, Natalie was a solicitor within the South Australian Government. In 2015, Natalie was appointed as a solicitor to the South Australian Child Protection Systems Royal Commission. During her time with the Royal Commission, Natalie worked a range of children protection systems issues including those faced by children with disability. In 2016, Natalie was awarded Australian Young Lawyer of the Year for her work on the Child Protection Systems Royal Commission.

Natalie led AFDO systemic advocacy activities in partnership with Patrick McGee, our National Manager – Policy, Advocacy & Research that promoted the work of the Disability Royal Commission.

Key outcomes included:

- Providing regular advice to AFDO Members to enable a deeper understanding of the Disability Royal Commission
- Representing AFDO publicly when commenting on the Disability Royal Commission
- Leading the development of the AFDO response to Issues Papers
- Chairing the National Online Justice Workshop involving the Disability Royal Commission and disability justice advocates

AFDO and our members are continuing to support the commission and participation of people with disability.

## Policy & Advocacy Priorities

AFDO has continued to focus on building our policy and advocacy framework, raising the profile of AFDO and our members on a national level, and building relationships with key stakeholders in the disability sector. Our members identified key policy and advocacy areas for us to pursue in 2018 and we regularly check in with all members to see if there are any others to include. The current nine areas for focus are:

- **Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of people with disability (now DRC)**
- **Access to Justice**
- **People with disability in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)**
- **Disability Support Pension**
- **Public Transport**
- **Employment Workforce Participation**
- **Advocacy and Inclusion**
- **Affordable Housing**
- **Better Health for people with disability**

Obviously, with limited resources and a small team we have prioritised and undertaken substantial work on the first six areas over the last year. We also undertook significant work during COVID-19 pandemic to ensure health, supports and services were maintained and considered for people with disability and their families.



# Policy Submissions

Over the 2019-2020 financial year, AFDO contributed to the following policy submissions:

- **Statement of Concern – COVID-19: Human rights, disability and ethical decision-making**
- **Increase Disability Support Pension now to deal with COVID-19**
- **Urgent measures needed to support people with disability during COVID-19 crisis**
- **AFDO Letter of support and endorsement for ADDC Submission to the Australian Government's new international development policy**
- **Submission on Second Draft of Religious Discrimination Act Legislation**
- **Pre Federal Budget Submission – 2020 – 2021**
- **Submission to Senate Community Affairs on the Adequacy of Newstart and other related payments**
- **Joint Submission to Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee on the NDIS Amendment (Streamlined Governance) Bill**
- **Submission to Department of Social Services re: Children with Disability in Out of Home Care**
- **Joint Submission on NDIS Thin Markets**



For further details please visit [www.afdo.org.au/our-work/policy-work/](http://www.afdo.org.au/our-work/policy-work/)

## Research

In October 2018 AFDO commissioned the National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling (NATSEM) to write a research report on the cost of disability in the context of the Disability Support Pension.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of September 2019 AFDO in partnership with the National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling (NATSEM), the University of Western Sydney (UWS) and Monash University held an event at Parliament House, Canberra to launch the three systemic reports into the Disability Support Pension calling on the Federal Government to urgently review the DSP. The three reports being:

- **Inequalities in Standards of Living: Evidence for Improved Income Support for People with Disability**, by Professor Laurie Brown National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling (NATSEM). This report focuses on the social and economic consequences of broadening the legibility or raising the rate of the DSP.
- **At What Cost: Indigenous Australians' experiences of applying for disability income support (Disability Support Pension)**, by Karen Soldatic, ARC DECRA & Senior Research Fellow and Michelle Fitts, Research Associate University of Western Sydney. This report examines the impact to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the community applying for the DSP.
- **The Health of Disability Support Pension and Newstart Allowance Recipients**, by Professor Alex Collie from Monash University. This report focuses on the health status and health service use of Australian receiving the DSP or Newstart Allowance.

AFDO in partnership with the University of Western Sydney and Monash University were to host a National Roundtable at Parliament House in March 2020 to bring together advocates, academics, policy makers and other key stakeholders to develop a national strategic approach to advocacy around the Disability Support Pension. However, this was postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions and is going ahead as three video conferencing workshops starting in August 2020.



# Employment – workforce participation

Access to sustainable employment remains out of reach for almost half of Australians with disability. Participating in the workforce is important for social inclusion and financial independence. Having a disability can impact on a person's ability and opportunities to participate in paid work.

## The facts

- **53% working-age people with disability participate in the labour force, compared to 83% working-age people without a disability** *“participate in the workforce” means employed or actively looking for work, sadly, this hasn't improved in over 30 years!*
- **Australia ranks way down the list being 21 out of the 29 OECD countries for labour force participation of people with a disability**
- 48% working-age people with disability are employed, compared with 79% without disability
- 51% of working-age men with disability are employed, compared with 84% without disability
- 23% of working-age men with severe or profound disability are employed
- 45% of working-age women with disability are employed, compared with 74% without disability
- 20% of working-age women with severe or profound disability are employed

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016

## Advantages of employing people with disability

There are significant business benefits when employing someone with disability— benefits beyond just filling a job. These advantages have been confirmed in both Australian and international studies highlighting:

- **Reliable** - people with disability take fewer days off, take less sick leave and have a higher retention rate than other workers. The costs to business of absenteeism and sick leave for employees with disability can be as low as 34% of the cost incurred by their colleagues.
- **Productive** - once in the right job, people with disability perform equally as well as other employees.
- **Affordable** - recruitment, insurance cover and compensation costs are lower. People with disability have fewer compensation incidents and accidents at work in comparison to other employees.
- **Good for business** - people with disability build strong relationships with customers and boost staff morale and loyalty by helping to create a diverse workforce. Teamwork is further enhanced. Real cost savings are realised through reduced turnover, recruitment and retraining costs. Hiring people with disability also enhances the company's image among its staff, community and customers with positive benefits to the employer's brand.



# Employment & Disability

Participation in employment for people with disability is central to achieving social inclusion, as well as contributing to good mental and physical health, personal well-being and self-worth.

## Barriers to employment

For people with disability, there are many barriers to finding employment. The barriers to employment for people with disability are linked to prejudice, stigma, stereotypes and discrimination.

Some of these barriers can include:

- Misinformed attitudes towards disability (i.e. people with disability are costly to employ and are less productive than people without disability)
- Employers' lack of understanding and confidence to talk about disability and its impact on those who work in their business
- Inaccessible workplaces
- Lack of visibility, with people with disability not well-represented in public roles, making it difficult to recognise their potential
- Lack of career development opportunities, including limited professional development and skills training, being passed over for promotion and higher duties, lack of job rotation etc.

Some of these barriers are real and some are perceived. Despite a very grim current picture, people with disability have significant potential that can be brought to the workforce in a wide range of industries and positions, from entry level to CEO.

## Discrimination in employment

A person with disability has a right to the same employment opportunities as a person without disability. If a person with disability can do the main activities or 'inherent requirements' of a job, then they should have an equal opportunity to do that job.

However, research shows that there is widespread discrimination against people with disability in employment, with 42% of complaints received by the Australian Human Rights Commission being disability discrimination complaints.

- 10% working-age people with disability are unemployed, compared to 5% working-age people without disability
- 30% working-age people with disability have been unemployed for at least 1 year, compared to 15% working-age people without disability



## Business Inclusion and Diversity Services

The Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO) runs the Business Inclusion & Diversity Services (BIDS), formerly known as the Diversity Field Officer Service (DFOS), which includes Deakin University as our evaluation partner. This service focuses on understanding small to medium business and assisting them to build their “disability confidence” to become welcoming, inclusive and accessible.

The service supports employers to make the most of the talents that people with disability can bring to a workplace, who then play an important role in changing attitudes for the better in Australia. In addition, the service provides information and mentoring services that enables many businesses to modify their premises, operations and policies, as well as being more inclusive and supportive to all employees.

To date, we have worked closely with 112 businesses in the Greater Geelong region and as their “disability confidence” has grown, it has resulted in 127 employment pathways being generated, ranging from open employment, internships and traineeships, through to job carving and work experience opportunities.

We have developed a greater awareness of disability and shone a light on the barriers faced by people with disability, with 842 businesses receiving tailored information or attending training sessions on various topics. It has been done from a disability lens, which also encourages greater diversity in the workforce and opens the door for these discussions across the community. In addition to generating employment pathways, participating businesses have also made accessibility and customer-focused improvements.

By showcasing local businesses who have embraced accessibility and employment of people

with disability, it has opened up the idea to others and shown the potential effects this can have on both their business and the community as a whole.

## Passport 2 Employment

Passport 2 Employment is a 7-week experiential program designed to provide students with disability the practical skills to prepare them for employment in a structured and safe learning environment. The overall aim is for participants to graduate from the program with positive aspirations and attitudes towards life after school and to support students as they become ready to join the workforce, enhancing their overall life skills and job readiness.

AFDO has been the auspice for P2E in the Geelong region for the last 4½ years in collaboration with National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) and Geelong Region Local Learning & Employment Network (GRLEN).

This successful and valuable program has thankfully been funded by a Give Where You Live community grant with 55 students participating over the last 2 years, resulting in several work experience opportunities, including some open employment placements. Towards the end of the program, students have to apply their learnings and attend the ‘Mock Interview Day’ where they are interviewed by local businesses.

A significant benefit of P2E, which is frequently highlighted, is the skill development of local employers who host the students on workplace visits and who act as mock interviewers. As a result of this information sharing and networking with business and industry, community and also related support agencies, the students are enabled to develop the skills and knowledge to look for, obtain and keep jobs, which in turn, builds successful new partnerships and aids in the growth of social capital within the community.

# Employment Pathway Outcomes – Through BIDS & P2E

## Operating results with participating businesses in Geelong Region;

- **842 people receive tailored information or attended BIDS training sessions**
- **112 businesses undertook 1:1 mentoring by BIDS staff**
- **82 people with a disability were assisted into employment pathways**

NOTE: We lost momentum and additional numbers in April, May and June 2020 due to COVID-19.

## Employment Pathways and Outcomes generated:

Open Recruitment.....	54 positions
Work Experience .....	21 positions
Internships / Traineeships.....	5 positions
Job Carving .....	2 positions
Total Pathways created.....	82

Employment increased significantly, from a starting base of 25% to an end result of 63% of participating businesses reporting they employed staff with disability.

75% of participating businesses planned to implement or had implemented at least one of the BIDS suggested interventions for the employment of people with disability.

The most commonly reported interventions included:

- Changing discussion on mental health in the work place (63%)
- Introducing work experience as part of their employment offerings (31%)
- Use of welcoming wording in all job applications (31%)

An impressive 93% of businesses reported being more confident to support a staff member who disclosed a disability.

## BIDS Feedback Summary

- **100% of post survey businesses reported they would recommend the Business Inclusion & Diversity Services to another business**
- **Overall 75% of businesses found the BIDS recommendations to be “Helpful” or “Very Helpful”**
- **All businesses surveyed rated the importance of face-to-face interaction as part of BIDS as “Important” (19%) or “Vital” (81%)**
- **Businesses indicated a desire to continue working with BIDS to either maintain their practises or help them develop their business in the future.**

Source: Murfitt. K, et.al. Destination Accessible BIDS (DFO) TGGB Interim Evaluation Report, 2020

# National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

The NDIS has now been in existence for seven years and is supporting over 392,000 participants to access the supports they need to live the life they choose. AFDO continues to work with its members, government and community to ensure that the NDIS meets the needs of people with disability.

## The facts

- At 30th June 2020, almost 392,000 Australians are being supported by the NDIS
- Over the last twelve months, there have been 105,894 new participants join the NDIS
- At 30th June 2020, there were approximately 8,200 children receiving supports in the Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) gateway
- 25,077 Australians being supported by the NDIS are Indigenous Australians
- 36,066 Australians being supported by the NDIS are Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)
- 122,830 participants (31%) have Autism as their primary disability
- 84,769 participants (22%) have Intellectual disability as their primary disability
- 37,795 participants (10%) have Psychosocial disability as their primary disability



# National Disability and Carer Alliance



## National Disability and Carer Alliance

The National Disability and Carer Alliance was established in 2009 by three peak organisations in the disability sector. These organisations included AFDO – representing people with disability; Carers Australia – representing families and carers; and National Disability Services (NDS) – representing disability service providers and have expanded our membership including Mental Health Australia for their expertise in this area. The focus of the Alliance is public advocacy on behalf of the disability sector.

In its early years, this alliance of organisations created the Every Australian Counts (EAC) campaign. The campaign was one of the driving forces behind the increase in public and political support for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Once the Federal and State governments committed to the NDIS, the Alliance began providing advice on how to put the scheme into place. It now works to maintain this bipartisan support for the NDIS and continues to actively ensure that the scheme delivers on its promise for people with Disability of “choice and control”.





## TSP Workshops

During 2017-2020, AFDO received funding from the Victorian Government through the NDIS Transition Support Package (TSP) to assist people with disability in Victoria to transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

AFDO's work over the past twelve months has built on the success of our TSP project work in the preceding two years. The TSP project was conducted through our Disability Loop brand, which was set up to assist people with disability to better understand the NDIS.

We undertook three distinct activities to support Victorians with disability and their families and carers to transition to the NDIS. We conducted workshop sessions entitled 'Getting the most out of your NDIS Plan' to help people with disability and their families and carers to better understand NDIS processes, their NDIS plan and how to get the most out of their plan. The sessions were delivered face-to-face throughout the year, and then due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we held the final session online as a webinar.

The "Getting the Most Out of Your NDIS Plan" sessions and webinar were very successful. We held the face-to-face sessions in accessible venues throughout metropolitan and regional Victoria, and we provided supports such as Auslan interpreters, captioning, and support workers so that people with disability could attend the sessions on their own, or if they preferred, they could attend with their family or carers.

We also produced an Information Pack which included Fact Sheets on the information that was provided in the session. The Information Pack was made available in hard copy and online for accessibility.

The attendees valued how interactive the sessions were and that the presenter, Ramona Mandy, AFDO's NDIS Project Officer was a person with disability, an NDIS participant, and someone independent from the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). Having a person with disability who was also an NDIS participant to write the session material and deliver the sessions created a safe space where people with disability could share their own stories and experiences, and discuss what has worked for them and what hasn't worked.



The online "Getting the Most Out of Your NDIS Plan" session was made into a webinar and uploaded to the AFDO YouTube channel. The session was conducted in two parts, and each part runs for about 90 minutes. The webinar uses plain language, and includes Auslan, captions, and a transcript. The webinar is available at:

<https://www.disabilityloop.org.au/resources/gettingthemostoutofyourndisplan>

Following all sessions, we conducted a survey which found:

- 69% of people said the information session increased their understanding of the NDIS and all reported that it increased their confidence in dealing with NDIS processes and putting their plan into action
- The majority believed the information session increased their ability to exercise choice and control when implementing their plan, and assisted them to get maximum benefit from their NDIS Plan

- 89% of respondents said the structure and format of the sessions and the Information Pack, were very useful. Many also commented on the value of the knowledge gained in the session, and appreciated the clarity of information provided

Throughout the TSP project, we produced and distributed quarterly editions of the Disability Loop eNews to keep people with disability up-to-date with NDIS news and resources. This newsletter has given people with disability the confidence and ability to access new resources from the NDIA and other sources, and in turn get the most out of their NDIS plan.



# International Partnerships

Our Vice President, Trevor Carroll, is AFDO's International Co-ordinator, and represents AFDO on the Australian Disability & Development Consortium (ADDC). He is also the Chair of the Disabled People's International (DPI) Asia-Pacific Executive, Information Officer on the DPI World Council Executive and our representative on the Pacific Disability Forum.

## Disabled People's International



AFDO is a Full member of DPI, and is privileged to hold the sole Australian representative vote on DPI, which has national disability organisational members in over 130 countries, 31 in the Asia Pacific.

DPI was established in 1981, the International Year of Disabled Persons. 39 years after it was formed, DPI continues to be the world's only cross-disability global Disabled People's Organization (DPO). It is in partnership with the United Nations.

[www.disabledpeoplesinternational.org](http://www.disabledpeoplesinternational.org)

## International Disability Alliance



International Disability Alliance (IDA) is an alliance of networks which brings together over 1,100 peak organisations of persons with disabilities and their families from across eight global and six regional networks including the Pacific Disability Forum of which AFDO is a full member.

Two of our AFDO member organisations have held the Chair role for IDA. Maryanne Diamond (Blind Citizens Australia), and Colin Allen (Deaf Australia).

[www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org](http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org)

## Pacific Disability Forum



AFDO is a full member of the Pacific Disability Forum (PDF). The PDF is a regional peak body that works in partnership with Disabled Persons Organisations (DPOs) in the Pacific region.

As part of its mission to improve the situation of persons with disabilities, it runs programs for women and youth with disabilities, research, advocacy, capacity building and development.

[www.pacificdisability.org](http://www.pacificdisability.org)

## Australian Disability Development Consortium



Australian **Disability+Development** Consortium

Australian Disability Development Consortium (ADDC) is an Australian based, international network focusing attention, expertise and action on disability issues in developing countries; building on a human rights platform for disability advocacy.

Its mission is to promote the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities in development activities, advocating that disability be fully integrated into all Australian development programs and policies.

[www.addc.org.au](http://www.addc.org.au)

## United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)



AFDO has Special Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), a status that gives us access to all of the UN bodies that are open to NGOs, including the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council.

ECOSOC, established under the United Nations Charter, is the principal organisation that coordinates economic, social, and related work of the 14 UN specialised agencies. It serves as the central forum for discussing international economic and social issues, and for formulating policy recommendations addressed to Member States and the United Nations system.

[www.un.org/ecosoc](http://www.un.org/ecosoc)

# Media & Communications

A big part of our work is raising awareness of issues impacting people with disability. We do this through media interviews and media releases, as well as through our newsletters and social media channels.

## Media releases

- [Disability sector calls for greater accountability re NDIA settlement outcomes](#)
- [Renewed Call for Urgent Continuation of Funding of the Cognitive Impairment Diversion Program \(CIDP\)](#)
- [Statement of Concern – COVID-19: Human rights, disability and ethical decision-making](#)
- [Disability Peaks welcome Federal Governments recognition & support of people with disability in handling CoronaVirus](#)
- [Now is the time to act on pandemic measures for people with disability](#)
- [Increase Disability Support Pension now to deal with COVID-19](#)
- [Joint Media Release – COVID-19](#)
- [Disability Support Pension Review](#)
- [People with disability tell United Nations about abuse & discrimination](#)
- [People with disability to take concerns to the United Nations](#)

## Newsletters

AFDO releases two eNewsletters – [AFDO eNews](#) and [Disability Loop eNews](#) (NDIS news).

You can subscribe to our newsletters here:

- [Subscribe to AFDO eNews](#)
- [Subscribe to Disability Loop eNews](#)



**eNewsletters**  
subscribers

**New 598**  
**Total 5,160**  
subscribers



**Twitter**  
followers

**New 899**  
**Total 9,881**  
followers



**Facebook**  
followers

**New 698**  
**Total 4,175**  
followers



**Linked In**  
followers

**New 241**  
**Total 1,606**  
followers



# Vale Sue Salthouse



On behalf of the Board of AFDO and Team we were deeply saddened by the sudden passing of Sue Salthouse.

Sue was an inspirational and tireless champion for the disability sector – particularly women. Her dedication, passion and generosity changed so many lives for the better.

Sue was the Chair of Women with Disabilities ACT (WWDACT) an AFDO member organisation, and was an inaugural Board member, and Chair of the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN), as well as the former President of Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA). Sue was also an Our Watch Ambassador, member of the NDIS Independent Advisory Council, Director of Rights and Inclusion Australia and more.

## Awards and Distinctions

- 2010 Edna Award for community activism
- 2011 Inclusion Award in recognition of working towards an inclusive attitude for people whatever their disability
- 2014 ACT Senior Woman of the Year
- 2015 Canberra Citizen of the Year for personal efforts and significant contribution working to improve the lives and opportunities for people with disability, and in particular women with disability
- 2015 CoAct Local Hero for exemplary work done in local areas
- 2020 ACT Senior Australian of the year

All who knew Sue will remember a kind, generous and deeply caring person. She will be sadly missed by all in the disability community.

**Liz Reid**

**AFDO President**

# Vale Phillip Beddall



The Board and Team of AFDO were saddened to hear of the passing of Phillip Beddall who passed away unexpectedly on 30 August 2019.

Phillip was Chairperson of Enhanced Lifestyles, an AFDO member organisation, and he had been a member of Enhanced Lifestyles since its inception in 1990.

Phillip was a dedicated and tireless disability and human rights advocate. He was known as a strong and active advocate for disability and social justice and was involved in a number of organisations and campaigns. In the 1980s and 1990s, Phillip worked at Disability Action Inc., a major disability advocacy agency in South Australia.

Phillip was a leader within the disability sector in South Australia as a vocal and high-profile human rights campaigner and disability advocate for over 30 years. He was the Vice Chair of the South Australian Council of Social services (SACOSS) as well as Chair and SA Co-ordinator of the Young People in Nursing Homes National Alliance (YPINH) and a supporter of the Barriers to Justice (B2J) campaign. Phillip was a dedicated and extremely busy man.

Phil had extensive experience in community broadcasting and was widely acknowledged for his expertise as both presenter and producer on disability and health issues. He was a long-time contributor and presenter at the 5RPH (Radio Print Handicapped) radio program. He was well known for his direct questioning and use of humour to get the best of guests on his program.

He could often be seen out and about in Adelaide, and took pride in advocating for the rights of people with disability and accessibility within his local council region, the Adelaide City Council.

Phillip will be sorely missed as an advocate and a member of the disability community.

**Liz Reid**

**AFDO President**

# Directors Report

The Board is responsible for the governance of AFDO in accordance with the Corporations Act, the Australian Charities & Not For Profit Commission Regulations and the AFDO Constitution.

The Board was made up of the following Member nominated, or Board-appointed Directors throughout the 2019 – 2020 Financial Year:

## **Liz Reid**

President

Nominated by Physical Disability Australia  
Person with disability

## **Trevor Carroll**

Vice President

Nominated by Disability Justice Australia  
Person with disability

## **Janine Neu**

Vice President

Nominated by People with Disabilities WA  
Person with disability

## **Christine Hunter**

Treasurer

Nominated by Deafness Forum of Australia  
Person with disability

## **Daniel Stubbs (resigned 21/10/19)**

Director

Nominated by Blind Citizens Australia  
Person with disability

## **John Simpson (appointed 21/10/19)**

Director

Nominated by Blind Citizens Australia  
Person with disability

## **Nick Rushworth**

Director

Nominated by Brain Injury Australia  
Person with disability

## **Debbie Kennewell**

Director

Nominated by Deaf Australia  
Person with disability

## **Felicity Crowther (Resigned 8/9/20)**

Director

Nominated by Inclusion Australia  
Person with lived experience of disability

## **Belinda O'Connor (appointed 21/10/19)**

Director

Nominated by Women with Disabilities ACT  
Person with disability

## **Frank Hall-Bentick (resigned 21/10/19)**

Director

Nominated by Disability Resources Centre  
Person with disability

## **Mary Henley-Collopy (appointed 21/10/19)**

Director

Nominated by Disability Resources Centre  
Person with disability

## **Richard Dent**

Director

Board Appointed for  
Leadership and Governance expertise  
Person with lived experience of disability

## Business registrations

ACN: 105 510 898

ABN: 25 105 510 898

### **National Office:**

Level 1, The Realm, 18 National Circuit,  
Barton, ACT 2600

### **Sydney Office:**

Level 15, Deloitte Building, 60 Station Street E,  
Parramatta NSW 2150

### **Melbourne & Registered Business Office:**

552 Victoria Street,  
North Melbourne VIC 3051

AFDO is a Public Benevolent Institution and  
a Registered Charity with the Australian Charities  
and Not for Profit Commission (ACNC)

## Board meetings

### **The Board met four times during the 2019-20 Financial Year**

16th September 2019

21st October 2019

4th February 2020

29th June 2020



## Executive Committee composition and meetings

The Executive is elected by the Board and  
comprised of the President, Vice Presidents  
and Treasurer.

The Executive Committee meet in between  
Board meetings, to ensure governance matters  
are addressed and continuity of AFDO operations.  
The Executive met two times between Board  
meetings by video conference during the  
2019-20 financial year;

19th August 2019

20th April 2020

## Finance, Audit & Risk Committee composition and meetings

The Committee is comprised of the President  
and Treasurer, resourced by the CEO & CFO,  
and all Directors are able to attend any meetings.  
It met three times by videoconference during  
the 2019-20 financial year;

25th July 2019

9th April 2020

18th June 2020

### **Company Secretary**

**Ross Joyce**

# Financial Snapshot

## 2019 - 2020 Results

Total Revenue.....\$2,700,467

Total Expenditure.....\$2,677,514

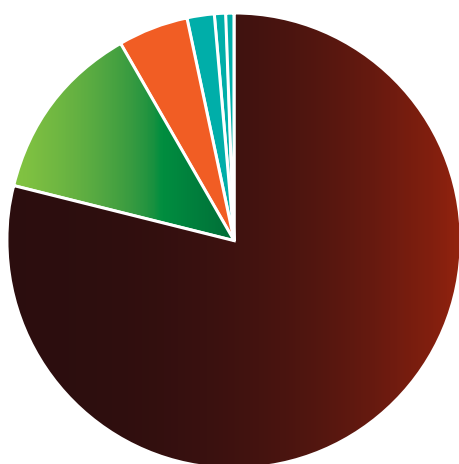
**Result - Surplus or (Deficit).....\$22,953**

Total Members Equity – Current.....\$465,135

Previous Year.....\$442,182

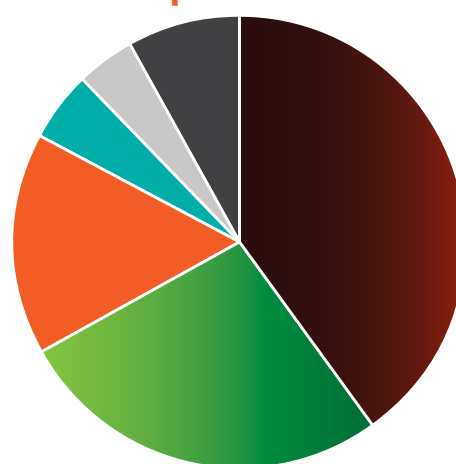
**Result – Increase or (Decrease).....\$22,953**

### Income



- Grants other sources.....< 80%
- Department of Social Services (DRO).....< 13%
- JobKeeper – COVID-19.....< 5%
- Donations/Other.....> 2%
- Investment interest.....< .30%
- Membership fees.....< .02%

### Expenditure



- Employment expenses.....< 40%
- Consortium distribution.....< 27%
- Consultancy.....> 16%
- Travel/Accomm/Meals.....< 5%
- Operating.....< 4%
- Other.....> 8%

**Note 1: Consortium Distribution** - Refers to funding obtained by AFDO for projects or other funded activities and distributed to AFDO national Full members or other AFDO members as part of undertaking these activities. **Total Distribution: \$711,182**

**Note 2: DeafBlind Australia** - AFDO auspices the operations, undertaking employment of any staff and full financial management. The effect of DBA in the financials for AFDO are;

**Total Income: \$347,684**

**Total Expenses: \$163,550**

The remaining balance for DBA allocated to the next financial year.

**Note 3: Every Australian Counts by National Disability & Carer Alliance** - AFDO auspices the operations, undertaking employment of any staff and full financial management. AFDO receives a fee for this work of \$20,000 per annum, with the effect of EAC in the financials being;

**Total EAC Income: \$501,560**

**Total EAC Expenses: \$435,149**

The remaining balance for EAC allocated to the next financial year.





**Australian Federation of  
Disability Organisations**

Our vision is that all people with disabilities must be involved equally in all aspects of social, economic, political and cultural life.