





**Physical Disability Australia Ltd**  
**Annual Report 2021-22**



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## President's Report



As the President of Physical Disability Australia (PDA), it is an honour to present my report for the 2021-22 Annual Report. The PDA team has continued to achieve positive results for our organisation and members, despite the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are continuing to build a supportive and collaborative organisational culture, with strong and respectful partnerships in all the work we do for, and with, our members and the wider community of Australians with Physical Disability.

PDA continues to reach out to our membership to identify gaps in service, to gather feedback on State and Federal issues to facilitate solutions, along with providing advocacy for members so that their human rights are being supported and protected.

Of particular note, PDA has continued its ongoing work with the Disability Royal Commission and has been actively involved in other areas such as representation at **Australia's Disability Strategy National Forum**, the development of the National Disability Advocacy Framework and the ACoSS' Australian Community Sector.

Other external areas that PDA have had input into in the past 12 months include:

- Australian Federation of Disability Organisation's (AFDO's) annual advocacy conference, The Advocacy Effect, bringing 100 disability advocates together to discuss, learn, prioritise, and connect;
- The President of PDA has been appointed to the Board of AFDO, and this will allow PDA to have an ongoing voice at the table;
- Developed position statements and media releases for The National Jobs and Skills Summit, the Reforms of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002, The Search for A New National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) CEO, and an update Bulletin in response to COVID-19 Pandemic;
- An invitation to be involved in consultations around rebuilding the trust in the National Disability Insurance Scheme; and
- Australia's National Disability Strategy Forum, along with past president, Liz Reid AM and our Ambassador, Dr Dinesh Palipana OAM.

PDA continues to submit position statements to State and Federal Governments outlining the work we do, and our commitment to our members in all jurisdictions across Australia.

Internally, PDA continues to develop its operational guidelines, work plans and strategic direction with the assistance of all Directors and Associate Directors across Australia and to update its website with news, bios and with short introduction videos to come.

We have continued to hold PDA's online Social Hour monthly and our younger Board members have developed online Youth Hangouts for our members aged 18-30. I am happy to report that these are very well received by all who attend.

We are continuously looking at ways to engage with our members and to this end, we have held online webinars, with topics such as “*You CAN Ask That*”, “*The Impact of Disability on Relationships*”, “*Acquiring a Disability Later in Life*” and “*NDIS Self-Management*” PDA uses the full suite of Social Media platforms and has seen some great growth and engagement across them all.

PDA has representation from all States and Territory’s, with Directors and Associate Directors that allows the PDA Board to be active and engaged at a local level, and I want to publicly thank them for all the volunteer hours they put into PDA.

All the activities and work completed is done on limited funding and are reliant on a small part-time team consisting of General Manager, Simon Burchill, Communications and Engagement Manager, Natasha Nobay, Finance Officer, Trish, Johnson, and my volunteer Board.

Dr Dinesh Palipana OAM, is PDA’s Ambassador, and I would like to, on behalf of the Staff and Board, thank him for continuing in this role. He has provided insight into the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic and has been a valuable information resource in the cross over between the medical and disability sectors. Thank you, Dinesh, and we look forward to our continued working relationship with you.

There is so much happening in the wider disability sector, particularly this year we have had a change of Federal Government and PDA is always looking for ways to secure more funding to do the work we do, and more importantly, to grow our staff team, so we can do more. We will continue to call on the Government to do the right thing for people with disabilities and to equitably fund the Disability Representative Organisations (DROs) and Disabled Peoples Organisations (DPO).

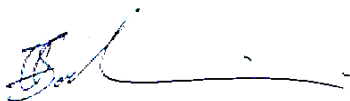
There is a place, and a value, for all DPO’s and DRO’s in Australia. PDA will continue the fight for them to be funded properly.

PDA will continue to collaborate and seek further opportunities to partner with other DRO’s and DPO’s to make sure that the disability sector has a strong and united voice.

I would like to especially thank my Executive Team, Talia Spooner-Stewart, Sharon Boyce, and Tim Harte for their exceptional work, and to thank all the State Directors and Associate Directors. Their contribution is valuable, and vital.

Finally, I would like to publicly acknowledge immediate Past President, Elizabeth (Liz) Reid AM for her exceptional leadership, her brilliant mentoring and her unwavering commitment to PDA and to the wider disability community. I most certainly have big shoes to fill.

Onwards and upwards into the new year.



Andrew Fairbairn  
President

## **General Manager's Annual Report**

2021-22 has been another eventful year for Physical Disability Australia (PDA), our partner organisations in the Disability Australia National Peaks Consortium and Australians with disability. As the COVID-19 Pandemic loses its grip on our way of life, and things start returning to normal I encourage all members and Australians with Physical Disability generally to continue to get COVID-19 vaccination boosters (and other seasonal vaccines) if you are medically able to do so and encourage your family, friends and support workers to do so as well.

As always PDA has continued working to improve the lives of all Australians with physical disability. Here are some of our successes in the 2021-22 Financial Year.

### *Submissions to Government Consultations*

My work has involved many meetings with government agencies and their consultants. Of particular note in 2021-22 were those regarding the NDIA's proposal to introduce Independent Assessments for people wanting to become NDIS Participants and existing Participants whose plans were up for renewal. In a major win for the disability community, the then incoming Minister for the NDIS and Government Services, Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds, decided to first pause the introduction of Independent Assessments and then scrap the initiative altogether with the promise to co-design future changes to the Scheme with participants and their representative organisations.

Rest assured, PDA will be an active contributor to the current Minister for the NDIS and Government Services, the Hon Bill Shorten MP's, Review into the NDIS so that it will deliver the reasonable and necessary supports that Participants with Physical Disability need in a quicker timeframe and with a reduced need to lodge a Review and appeal through the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

### *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport (DSAPT)*

Early this year, the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, and the Arts called for submissions on proposed reforms to the DSAPT covering many aspects of public transport and the measures required to make vehicles and infrastructure fully accessible to passengers with Physical Disability. In response PDA provided a detailed submission arguing (in almost all instances that the most comprehensive requirements be included in the Standards as a means to hold public transport operators to account and fast track the modernisation of Australia's public transport systems. You can find a copy of PDA's submission on our website ([pda.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/PDA-Stage-2-Transport-Reforms-Submission-09Aug22.pdf](http://pda.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/PDA-Stage-2-Transport-Reforms-Submission-09Aug22.pdf))

### *Working with the Disability Royal Commission*

The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation has continued to provide a grant to PDA (through our membership with the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations - AFDO) to work with them in promoting their work and encouraging people with disabilities to provide information. I have also been attending quarterly meetings with senior employees of the commission to get updates on what is happening and provide feedback.

The time has passed for people to organise Personal Sessions to tell their stories of Violence, Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation to a Commissioner, but written (and recorded submissions about these experiences can still be made until the end of the year, so if you are considering making a submission, you need to do it quickly.

### *NDIS Co-Design Activities*

As a response to the debacle that was the plan to introduce Independent Assessments as part of the process for NDIS access and planning decisions, the Agency have embarked on a number of projects to codesign their systems with people with disability and their representative organisations. As part of this, PDA has participated in discussions about the NDIS Home and Living Policy and their processes around Information Gathering for Access and Planning.

In a welcome development, the NDIA has acknowledged that participation in these meetings uses a lot of PDA employees' time and effort and has provided a grant for our continuing involvement in these activities.

### Self-Management Website

To promote the benefits of self-managing NDIS supports, PDA created a website ([ndisselfmanagement.com.au/](http://ndisselfmanagement.com.au/)) that has information and resources to help NDIS Participants apply for self-management status, work out whether they want to use a service provider or directly employ their own staff, and meet their tax and superannuation obligations.

### Disability Employment Support Model consultation

PDA has also provided a response to a consultation paper published on the DSS Engage website regarding the support that would best assist job-seekers with disability to find mainstream employment. Our answers to the consultation paper's questions focused on the need for people with disability to be supported through mainstream services rather than a specialist Disability Employment Service (DES). It was our argument that these have not been very successful and, we thought, contribute to employer misconceptions about the capacity of employees with disability. You can read PDA's submission on our website ([pda.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/PDA-Response-to-Employment-Consultation-Paper-01Feb22.pdf](http://pda.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/PDA-Response-to-Employment-Consultation-Paper-01Feb22.pdf))

### Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) Submission

Our final submission for 2021-22 was to the AHRC regarding an application from the NSW City of Ryde for an exemption from the need to make 100% of their bus stops DSAPT compliant by the end of 2022. The City's arguments were that the topography is challenging, they had troubles liaising with *Transport for NSW*, and the COVID-19 pandemic affected their income and labour resources. Our submission argued against the granting of exemptions in general and in specific terms around the ease of making stops accessible and the generous timeframes provided in the DSAPT for compliance. A copy of the submission can be found on the AHRC website ([humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/pda\\_submission\\_0.pdf](http://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/pda_submission_0.pdf))

### Financial Challenges

Despite the additional funds received from the Disability Royal Commission and the NDIA, PDA's finances remained in depleted state during the 2021-22 Financial Year. Our core funding through DSS has been raised to \$49,595 from the less than \$30,000 that we were receiving in recent years, but this still restricts the number of our employees can work on PDA projects while we wait on yet another review of the federal government's DRO Program and the allocation of its resources.

### In Conclusion

In 2021-22 we were able to quickly fill the casual vacancy of the Assistant Director representing Queensland (with Sarah Styles replacing Kathryn Lyons) and retain Liz Reid's involvement in the organisation by recruit Associate Directors for 6 of the 8 states and territories (see the 'our team page on the PDA website ([pda.org.au/our-team/](http://pda.org.au/our-team/)) or the Personnel page of this Annual Report for details of all the organisation's Directors, Associate Directors and employees).

I wish to thank our Communication and Engagement Manager, Natasha Nobay, Finance Officer, Trish Johnson, and all the Directors and Associates for their efforts and I trust all our members will enjoy a happy holiday season and that 2023 is a year that sees continuing growth, engagement and representation for Australians living with Physical Disability!



Simon Burchill  
General Manager



## **Communications and Engagement Manager's 2022 Annual Report**

With PDA having embraced and survived an eventful 2022, it is with great pleasure that I present the Communications and Engagement report.

COVID-19 has continued to play a considerable role in all of our lives over the past twelve months. We have endured many challenges, celebrated moments, farewelled key figures, re-focused our thoughts and actions and now look towards a 2023 of hope, promise and optimism. During this time, The PDA Team has worked hard this year to address issues of concern and importance to Australia's disability community and to support and engage our Members.

Through a big push on providing information and discussion around key subjects of interest and need, PDA presented regular webinars and presentations that were well received and accessed by both our Members and the wider community. With our presenters and panelists providing their expertise, time and experiences on a voluntary basis, it is with great gratitude that we extend our thanks. Without their involvement and commitment, these events would not be made available to you all - so thank you to all who have been involved.

Thank you too to all of you who have attended these events, watched the recordings on the PDA YouTube channel, suggested webinar topics, and been supportive of our efforts. Also a big thank you to those of you who have filled in our webinar surveys and provided feedback. Information shared in this way will enable us to continue to present future webinars, so we ask you to please complete these surveys if you attend a live presentation or watch one of our recorded webinars. Links to these are supplied to attendees via email post webinar or are included in our YouTube video descriptions. We encourage you to fill in these short surveys for all webinars and recordings that you access.

We already have a number of interesting webinar topics scheduled for 2023 and look forward to bringing these to you and having you attend. Similarly, if you have an area of expertise or experience in a subject that may be of importance to our Members and you'd like to volunteer your time and join one of our webinars as a panellist, please get in contact. We welcome your involvement, suggestions and input.

2022 has shown our monthly online catch-ups continue to grow in popularity. Born out of a real want and need from our Members to find support, contact, community, belonging and escape during the initial uncertainty and isolation of a COVID-19 world, regular attendees at both our Social Hours and Youth Network HangOuts continue to bring together our Members and create a community that is fun, supportive and welcoming. If you haven't yet attended one of these regular Social get-togethers, I encourage you to give them a go. Our Social Hours are held on the first Monday of every month at 6pm Australian Eastern Time and for our Members aged 18 to 30 our Youth Network HangOuts are held on the third Thursday each month at 7pm Australian Eastern Time.

As an added incentive, our final Social Hour for the year on the 5<sup>th</sup> December will again include our fun Christmas Bingo, with some really great prizes up for grabs. The Youth Network HangOut on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December also promises some fun and giveaways. Make sure that you end the year on a fun note and join one of these great PDA events. You'll be glad that you did.

It's been wonderful to see our social media presence continue to grow in strength and impact over 2022. Providing a great tool for communicating with our Members,

building on Membership numbers and increasing visibility and brand awareness of PDA, this also helps to drive focus and awareness not just of the organisation, but also of disability issues and events of importance and interest to the wider public. Please feel free to share any of our posts, blogs or links with others.

In ensuring that our Members (and the general public) are kept up to date with organisational activities, disability news and information of importance and interest to the Australian disability community, PDA regularly posts to the blog page on our website ([www.pda.org.au/blog/](http://www.pda.org.au/blog/)), a number of Facebook pages and groups, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter.

We are very fortunate to have several members actively play a regular role in writing pieces for our blog page and for sharing news articles and posts to our Facebook Discussion Group. We appreciate this involvement and thank those of you who do so.

In analysis of our social media platform growth for 2022, it is worth mentioning that increases in numbers have been totally achieved organically (i.e. free of advertising and promotion expenses). Our growth in social media presence continues to provide PDA with an essential tool to furthering knowledge of our organisation, increasing membership numbers and solidifying brand awareness. Analysed in the form of followers, likes, comments and shares by individuals, fellow disability organisations, government departments, service providers, the greater disability community and the general public, the growth for the 2021-22 Financial Year is as follows:

#### Facebook

- Main PDA Facebook page 'likes' – 3,022 (19.7% increase)
- Main PDA Facebook page 'Followers' – 5,545 (29.9% increase)
- PDA Facebook Discussion Group membership – 4,178 (34% increase)

#### LinkedIn

- We now have 771 'Followers' (124.8% increase)

#### Instagram

- PDA Instagram page 'Followers' – 1,783 (10.7% increase)
- PDA Youth Alliance Instagram 'Followers' – 627 (10.2% increase)

#### Twitter

- We now have 1,046 'Followers' (25.4% increase)

#### YouTube

PDA's YouTube channel continues to grow in popularity - with views, shares and subscribers steadily growing and providing Members and interested parties access to our organisation's promotional and informational videos. 27 recordings are now available to view. We encourage you to subscribe to the PDA YouTube channel so that you receive timely alerts when new videos are uploaded.

#### 2022 Webinar Series

Last Financial Year we have hosted four webinars and a number of informational presentations and consultancy forums for external organisations and government bodies. We look forward to providing a 2023 calendar of webinars that address issues of interest and importance to our Members and the Australian disability community. Please keep an eye on our social media and PDA emails for updates and invitations and feel free to share these with people and groups in your networks who may enjoy or benefit from these events.

### PDA Membership Growth

In the last Financial Year, PDA welcomed 116 new members and we now have over 1,180 Australians with Physical Disability and their supporters on our books.

Sadly, over the past year we have lost a number of our Members who have passed away. To the families and friends of these Members we extend our condolences.

Of our experienced growth, this has predominantly been achieved through word of mouth and social media presence. PDA recognises and thanks those of you who have played a role in this increase in membership numbers – whether through sharing posts or encouraging others to join PDA. If you know of others who would benefit from PDA Membership, please feel free to encourage and invite them to sign up for our free membership by going to [www.pda.org.au/membership/](http://www.pda.org.au/membership/).

### 2022 and Beyond

In my role as PDA's Communications and Engagement Manager, I am appreciative of the support of PDA's Board and Members. Thank you to all who give me the opportunity to be involved in an organisation that is so welcoming, supportive, truly inclusive and built on community.

Together we are strong. Together we are seen. Together we are heard.

Together we are PDA!

Wishing you all a safe, happy, healthy, successful and beautifully memorable festive season and 2022.



Natasha Nobay  
Communications and Engagement Manager



## Treasurer's Annual Report

### Income

In the 2021-22 financial year, PDA's total income (\$129,462.66) was down from the previous year's total (\$184,693.12) by around 30 percent. This was a better than expected result given start-of-the-year budget expectations of \$105,900.

We continued to received funding from the Royal Commission into Violence Abuse Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (\$48,500), and the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO) (\$27,272 as our share of the Federal Government's DRO funding and \$31,920 from their ILC grants).

With regard to the outlook for the 2022-23 financial year, PDA is expecting a modestly higher income due to increased grant funding to the DRO Program and the NDIA for remuneration in return for our participation in an increasing number of engagement and consultation programs.

### Expenditure

The major items of expenditure in the last financial year were:

- Wages and superannuation – (\$147,060) to employ the PDA General Manager, Simon Burchill, for 20 hours per week, Promotion Officer Natasha Nobay for 20-15 hours per week, and Finance Officer, Trish Johnson, for 12 hours per week;
- Travel expenses and conference costs – (\$1,222) to hold an Executive meeting in Brisbane and attend some government consultation meetings in the few times when interstate travel has funded;
- Computer Software, Website and Consultancy costs – (\$7,849) for the tools employees use to do their work and the ongoing development on PDA's various internet domains; and
- Printing and postage – (\$3412) to provide paper copies of the PDA Newsletters to members without email addresses.

In summary, PDA had an operating deficit of \$43,788.78 for the 2021-22 financial year and the organisation had \$ 105,097.34 in available cash reserves on 1 July 2021.

Many thanks go to our Manager, Simon Burchill and Finance Officer, Trish Johnson for their work in managing PDA's finances on a day-to-day basis.



Tim Harte  
Treasurer

# Profit and Loss

## Physical Disability Australia Ltd For the year ended 30 June 2022 Cash Basis

	2022	2021
<b>Gross Profit</b>	-	-
<b>Other Income</b>		
AFDO - Disability Royal Commission Grant	48,500.00	48,500.00
AFDO Strategic Planning	-	414.20
AFDO-NDIS Jobs & Markets Fund	5,000.00	6,000.00
Covid-19 Cash Boost Stimulus Package	-	11,028.00
Covid-19 JobKeeper	-	52,200.00
Disability Advocacy Network Australia Inc (DANA)	2,250.00	-
Donations - Paypal	609.00	163.00
Donations Received	-	370.00
DSS - Disability Gateway Reference Group	-	10,000.00
ILC - Individual Capacity Building Grant	26,920.90	26,920.90
Interest Income	89.86	385.49
NDIS Income	540.18	-
The Disability and Career Service Improvement and Sector Support Activity: DRO	45,552.72	28,711.53
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>129,462.66</b>	<b>184,693.12</b>
<b>Operating Expenses</b>		
Advertising & Promotions	584.00	934.55
Auditing and Accounting	700.00	650.00
Bank Fees	121.73	117.11
Computer Software etc	2,212.05	1,724.83
Depreciation - P&E Immediate Write-off	1,816.36	-
Donations	-	500.00
Fees - Xero Subscription	788.90	776.90
General Expenses	1,124.74	195.45
Insurance	3,281.82	2,763.64
Members/Promotions	1,380.72	1,502.62
Office Expenses	101.35	696.37
Postage & freight	3,412.46	3,470.93
Repairs and Maintenance	226.36	-
Subcontractors	1,000.00	2,415.50
Subscriptions	2,033.20	1,018.67
Telephone	1,620.52	727.02
Training	227.27	-
Travel - National	1,222.67	10,165.09
Wages - Employees	133,709.13	117,969.55
Wages - Superannuation	13,351.92	10,551.09
Wages - Workers Compensation	1,518.17	499.11

Profit and Loss

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	2022	2021
Website Development & Management	2,818.07	1,875.00
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>173,251.44</b>	<b>158,553.43</b>
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>(43,788.78)</b>	<b>26,139.69</b>

# Balance Sheet

## Physical Disability Australia Ltd

As at 30 June 2022

Cash Basis

	30 JUN 2022	30 JUN 2021
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Bank</b>		
Bendigo Everyday Acc 120469325	6,752.36	11,567.78
Bendigo Funding Acc. 137580866	70,346.03	106,935.05
Bendigo M/card 700576739	1,523.76	4,722.71
Term Deposit - 168958734	25,524.83	25,443.48
AUD PayPal	950.36	348.86
<b>Total Bank</b>	<b>105,097.34</b>	<b>149,017.88</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>105,097.34</b>	<b>149,017.88</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
GST Clearing Account	11,290.00	11,868.00
Provision for Annual Leave	3,522.50	3,522.50
Provision for LSL	2,248.42	2,248.42
Superannuation Payable	2,847.78	2,401.54
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>19,908.70</b>	<b>20,040.46</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>19,908.70</b>	<b>20,040.46</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>85,188.64</b>	<b>128,977.42</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
Current Year Earnings	(43,788.78)	26,139.69
Retained Earnings	128,977.42	102,837.73
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>85,188.64</b>	<b>128,977.42</b>

## **Minutes from 27 November 2021 Physical Disability Australia (PDA) Annual General Meeting**

**Meeting opened at 3:00pm AEDT**

### **Introductory Matters**

*Attendees:* Liz Reid (NT- President), Talia Spooner-Stewart (ACT - Vice President), Tiffany Trudgeon (VIC), Andrew Fairbairn (WA), Melanie Hawkes (WA), Kathryn Lyons (QLD), Robert Wise (VIC), Tammy Milne (TAS), Mark Pietsch (NSW), Tim Marks (TAS), Nick Schumi (SA), Tim Harte (VIC), Paul Williamson (ACT), Annette Gardiner (SA), John Moxon (NSW), Fran Vicary (QLD), Norma Seip (VIC), Jonathan Shar (NSW), Sharon Boyce (QLD), Paul Watson (NT), Virginia Brown (WA), Simon Burchill (General Manager).

*Apologies:* Krystal Matthews (SA), Natasha Nobay (Promotion Officer), Trish Johnson (Finance Officer).

*Proxies:* John Spark (VIC) appointing Liz Reid.

*Declaration of Quorum:* There being 21 PDA full members present at the start of the meeting, quorum was confirmed.

### **Traditional Welcome**

*PDA acknowledges the traditional owners of the lands in which we dwell and pays its respects to elders past and present. We also acknowledge people with disability, past and present, those who are living full and complete lives and those who have needs that are not yet being met. We ask you to reflect on this and to work with us to bring about the changes that will give ALL people with disability an opportunity to live their best lives.*

### **Minutes of 2020 AGM**

The minutes of the 5 December 2020 AGM were brought to the meeting's attention and attendees were asked if any corrections were needed. None were requested.

Motion: That the Minutes of the 2020 PDA AGM be approved.

Proposer: Paul Watson (NT)

Secunder: Robert Wise (VIC)

### **President's Report**

Liz Reid highlighted the contents of her President's Report that was circulated before the meeting. Summarising the year, she noted that it had been a big year that began with a truncated face-to-face meeting that had to be abandoned because of a COVID-19 outbreak in Brisbane. Despite this, useful work was done revamping the Strategic Plan and setting priorities for the coming year. Liz made special mention of

- PDA's Youth Network and the work done by its organising committee in holding regular 'Hang-Outs' for members aged 18-30;
- Natasha Nobay's work in getting PDA's social media presence ranked in Australia's top-ten for disability related groups; and
- Dr Dinesh Palipana OAM for serving as PDA's inaugural ambassador.

She thanked the Executive and PDA's employees for their contributions over the year.

In closing, Liz advised that this is her final report as President as her nine year term on the Board of Directors is coming to an end.

Motion: That the President's Report be accepted

Proposer: Mark Pietsch (NSW)

Secunder: Andrew Fairbairn (WA)

### **Manager's Report**

Simon Burchill started by thank Liz Reid for her work as President over his employment with the organisation and went on to briefly describe the contents of his Manager's Report. He noted that PDA had been busy with:

- Many meetings with government around the COVID-19 pandemic and the effects of lockdowns on people with disability;
- Writing submissions to a number of government consultations;
- Promoting the work of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability with social media posts and a dedicated page on the PDA website; and
- Running a successful series of webinars to inform and inspire members.

Simon also drew the meeting's attention to the fact that PDA remains a significantly underfunded representative organisation for people with disability in comparison with some of our partner organisations and that we were fortunate to receive assistance from the Federal Government's *JobKeeper* program during the Pandemic.

In closing Simon thanked, Natasha Nobay and Trish Johnson, his fellow employees, and the PDA Team of Directors and Associate Directors for assisting his work.

Motion: That the Manager's report be accepted

Proposer: Jonathan Shar (NSW)

Secunder: Peter Simpson (NSW)

### **Promotion Officer's Report**

In her absence, Simon Burchill gave a brief synopsis of Natasha Nobay's report. She highlighted her enjoyment working for PDA, especially the monthly Social Hours that have grown in participant numbers over the past year. Natasha's report also included a list of statistics that showed consistent growth in follower numbers in all the organisation's Social Media Channels (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn). She also highlighted that PDA's blog had 35 posts for the year and that the organisation's membership had grown to 1,097.

Motion: That the Promotion Officer's Report be accepted

Proposer: Talia Spooner-Stewart (ACT)

Secunder: Tammy Milne (TAS)

### **Treasurer's Report**

Jonathan Shar referred attendees to the written report and noted revenue was up 42 percent on the previous year in large part due to the federal government's *JobKeeper* program and some contributions for participation in the Australian Federation of Disability Organisation's (AFDO's) Information Linkages and Capacity-building (ILC) program grants. This enabled PDA to post a small surplus and maintain employee hours over the financial year ending June 2021.



Motion: That the Treasurer's report and Financial Statements be accepted.

Proposer: Tim Marks (TAS)

Secunder: Mark Pietsch (NSW)

### **Appointment / Election of Directors and Associate Directors**

The 3-year directorship terms of Jonathan Shar (NSW), Sharon Boyce (QLD), and Talia Spooner-Stewart (ACT) had expired and that they were eligible for re-election, and that the 9 year term limit of Liz Reid (NT) meant that a new Director was also required to represent the Northern Territory (NT) on the PDA Board of Directors..

PDA received nomination forms from Sharon Boyce (QLD), Talia Spooner-Stewart (ACT), and Paul Watson (NT).

Whilst not needing consideration, the following personal statements were provided:

#### Sharon Boyce:

Physical Disability Australia is a great organisation and I hope you will give me your support to continue working as a director and with government and other disability organisations to make it even better. I understand disability policy and the processes behind governance and how to engage in best practice. I understand the legal obligations for the organisation. We need rights and to have real choice and control of our lives. As a group we can make this happen. Please give your vote and I will not disappoint you.

#### Talia Spooner-Stewart

My name is Talia Spooner-Stewart and I am currently the ACT Director of Physical Disability Australia and would like to re-elect for this role for one last term as per PDA guidelines. In my tenure as the ACT director for the past nearly 6 years I believe I have been a consistent contributor to the organisation and further to our members of PDA. I have and will continue to listen and collaborate with the board and members to ensure every person living with a disability is provided an opportunity to live their best lives. I have had the pleasure of working with the board and the executive to set PDA'S guiding principles, values and strategic goals to be a source of reference and a trusted engagement source within the industry.

Should I be re-elected for a final term, it will allow me to work together with Paul Williamson the ACT Associate Director and ensure the ACT position is accountable and making an impact in the national landscape and the voices and concerns of our ACT members with a physical disability are being heard and raised and will continue to be in the future I have loved working with PDA and with your support would like to continue.

#### Paul Watson

I am currently serving as the Associate Director in the Northern Territory, I joined Physical Disability Australia at the request of current serving director. This decision was made not only because I have a disability, it was also because of PDA's purpose, values and objectives and the community with which they are connected. I have learnt and grown with the guidance of the outstanding executives of PDA and now offer myself up for the position of PDA NT Director. My current employment has given me the opportunity to work with people with a wide variety disabilities and barriers. Much of the skills and resources that PDA has afforded me has given me better opportunities to help and support my employees. If given the opportunity to be a PDA Director, I will uphold the core beliefs, practices and community, Continue to learn and grow, to ensure I can offer is members the best of me.

As there were no other nominations for these jurisdictions, Simon Burchill (in his capacity as Returning Officer) declared Sharon Boyce, Talia Spooner-Stewart and Paul Watson duly elected for the jurisdictions of QLD, ACT and NT respectively.

With regard to NSW, PDA received nomination forms from Mark Pietsch and Jonathan Shar so an election was required.

The following personal statements were provided to assist members with their voting preference:

#### Mark Pietsch

As a person with a movement disorder, steps are not my friend. as a person that relies on a mix of assistive technology I strongly push for greater consultation with people with physical disabilities in regards to the design of home and living supports funded through the NDIS.

I have a long history of advocacy and lobbying, assisting and leading projects at a grass roots level through to intergovernmental relations. I pride myself on listening, though am not afraid to speak up for those who struggle to do so themselves.

I am an absolute nerd when it comes to legislation and policy. I have experience successfully lobbying for change at a ministerial level, most notably in relation to employment supports in the NDIS to assist participants in self-employment and the open market. I enjoy collaborating and sharing resources to address equity issues in society.

My personal and business mission is to highlight the abilities of all people and to actively work to reduce barriers faced by the disability community through education, support and connection to resources to assist bridging the equity gap faced by our community. My values are reflected in the small organisation I lead. where our primary values are that of integrity, creativity, diversity, community and commitment.

#### Jonathan Shar

Physical Disability Australia is more than just a peak body for people with disabilities through the pandemic it has become a community. Throughout my current term I have listened to the concerns of our members both directly and through social media to always represent their concerns in every board consideration. I have studied Marketing, Business Administration and currently Social Justice, with this skillset I will seek to support the advocacy and strategic direction of PDA to deliver better outcomes for people with physical disabilities by holding government and service providers to account.

I have demonstrated through my current tenure an understanding of the priorities for the community and have a grasp of the current policies and initiatives of PDA therefore I can support our staff members to continue existing programs and innovative towards new ones when new funding sources emerge.

As the meeting was being held using Zoom videoconferencing, Simon asked the 21 members present to vote by each sending a direct message to him using the chat function. He reminded everyone that Liz had 2 votes as she was assigned a proxy.

The result of the vote was 12 votes for Mark Pietsch and 10 votes for Jonathan Shar. Simon Burchill (in his capacity as Returning Officer) then declared Mark Pietsch duly elected as Director representing NSW on the Board of Directors.

Liz Reid, reassuming the chair role, congratulated the successful candidates and thanked Jonathan Shar for his years of service on the Board. She and other members present hoped he would continue to be involved in PDA's work going forwards.

### **Constitutional Amendment**

Simon Burchill advised the meeting that it was the Board's intention to present a Constitution amendment to acknowledge the role of Associate Directors and provide rules for their appointment, removal and participation in Director's (Board) meetings. A draft amendment document was prepared and included in the AGM documents, however, it was felt by some members that it should be reviewed by someone with legal expertise to ensure it complied with the various legislative instruments governing PDA's operations.

The meeting decided not to put a motion to accept the Constitution amendment at this time with a view to considering it at next year's Annual General Meeting or a sooner Special General Meeting.

### **Other Business**

#### Statement by Dr Dinesh Palipana

PDA's Ambassador joined the meeting to make a brief statement. He noted that before his spinal injury he never knew what life was like for people with disability. He said that he felt very lucky to live in Australia because of the supports that are available through the NDIS that aren't provided in many other countries. He was happy to work with PDA in regard to making good things better for people with disability.

Dr Palipana noted that the COVID-19 Pandemic continues to cause problems around the world for many people with disability as it impacts access to support workers and social isolation. He also expressed concern over health care for people with disability potentially being deprioritised as systems struggle to keep up with demand. He encouraged all PDA members to make sure they were fully vaccinated.

In closing he thanked the organisation for letting him be involved and he looked forwards to continuing in the role of Ambassador.

#### Other member statements

John Moxon advised the meeting the State Library of NSW was creating an aural history of disability in the state and that he and his wife were being interview as part of the project.

**Meeting Closed at 4:30pm AEDT**

**PDA Board of Directors (as at 1 November 2022)**



Andrew Fairbairn  
President (WA)



Talia Spooner-Stewart  
Vice-President (ACT)



Sharon Boyce  
Vice-President (QLD)



Tim Harte  
Treasurer (VIC)



Nick Schumi  
Director (SA)



Tim Marks  
Director (TAS)



Paul Watson  
Director (NT)



Mark Pietsch  
Director (NSW)



Sarah Styles  
Associate Director (QLD)



Liz Reid  
Associate Director (NT)



Tammy Milne  
Associate Director (TAS)



Robert Wise  
Associate Director (VIC)



Peter Simpson  
Associate Director (NSW)



Paul Williamson  
Associate Director (ACT)



Melanie Hawkes  
Associate Director (WA)



Krystal Matthews  
Associate Director (WA)

**PDA STAFF**



Simon Burchill  
Manager



Natasha Nobay  
Promotion Officer



Trish Johnson  
Finance Officer