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Please feel free to re-use material in the newsletter with appropriate acknowledgement to Deafness Forum of Australia

Deafness Forum of Australia

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Currently **one in six** Australians suffer from some form of hearing loss. This may increase to one in four by 2050. *Access Economics 2006*

news

WHAT HAVE WE BEEN DOING IN THE PAST MONTH?

Our work involves a number of different activities aimed at assisting you, our members; at developing relationships with key stakeholders, and furthering our lobbying and systemic advocacy work. Just brief snapshots of some of the activities the staff have undertaken in the past month since the last newsletter include:

- o Attended a meeting at the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission about captioning of DVDs
- o Attended a meeting of the Australian Federation of Deaf Societies, as a guest
- o Attended a meeting of CEOs of member organisations of the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO)
- o Attended a briefing by Minister for Families on the Commonwealth/State and Territory Disability Agreement
- o Attended a FaCSIA roundtable discussion with other disability CEOs on the Commonwealth/State and Territory Disability Agreement
- o Met with Senator Penny Wong (Shadow Minister for Workforce Participation) with other disability organization CEOs, organized by AFDO
- o Attended the Media Access Australia captioning roadshow when it came to Canberra
- o Met with David Fraser, Adviser to Minister for Families, Mal Brough
- o Attended a briefing at University of Canberra, relating to the work a final year student is undertaking for Deafness Forum on standards for the early years of a child's life when diagnosed with deafness
- o Attended the Department of Health and Ageing Budget briefing
- o Attended the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs Budget briefing
- o Met with Minister for Ageing, Hon Christopher Pyne
- o Met with Senator Jan McLucas, Shadow Minister for Ageing, Disability and Carers.

WEBSITE UPDATES



As usual, there have been various additions and updates to the main Deafness

Forum Website: www.deafnessforum.org.au. Please take the time to visit the Website on a regular basis to keep up with what is happening.

CAPTIONING OF DVDS

Deafness Forum is representing the deafness sector on a small HREOC working party with DVD distributors and other media players, to try to come to an agreement about captioning of DVDs.

CAPTIONING IN CINEMAS



Deafness Forum and AAD have written to the cinema industry. We are now approaching the sixth year of cinema access organised through the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) agreement. Whilst the agreement has served its purpose, we feel a comprehensive review of the entire arrangement is now due.

AFDO ROUNDTABLE ON CREATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

DF is a member of the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO) and recently CEO Nicole Lawder attended a round of meetings in Brisbane organized by AFDO. On Monday morning with other peak body CEOs and AFDO we spoke with Penny Wong (Shadow Workforce Participation Minister) we talked about the lack of support for the working age group who are Deaf or hearing impaired, about more hours of interpreting in Auslan for Employment, and CART for people who are hearing impaired under a similar system.

On Monday afternoon a number of DF representatives (Liz Evans, Peter Lindley, Jill Lindley, Ross McKeown, Alan Keir, Stan Batson and Nicole Lawder) attended a roundtable discussion on creative solutions for people with a disability.

Minister for Families and Community Services Mal Brough attended and spoke, mostly about the 4th Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement. Then there were some small group sessions

Attendee Liz Evans said of the event: "I enjoyed the Brisbane AFDO roundtable meeting which included group discussions about how to include future planning for the needs of people with Disabilities in the next round of CSTDA. It was great to see some of the other disability groups representing and putting forward their views and it's always great to meet and network with people also.

There was limited time for our discussions, meaning we were only able to give generalised recommendations, but as always all the more opportunities for representatives from Deafness Forum to be active in these types of discussions on a National level, the better.

I also appreciated having CART, and the FM system for those who used it. An Auslan interpreter was also provided for the signing Deaf participants."

On Tuesday there was a meeting of AFDO member CEOs, this discussed challenges in the sector including the need for a more realistic indexation of funding grants.

RESPONDENTS SOUGHT FOR ARTICLE ON HEARING LOSS

A journalist from the *Readers Digest* is seeking people with sensorineural hearing loss to interview for an upcoming article. Please contact

helensigny@hotmail.com or call Helen on 0425202 654 if you would like to be interviewed. Names can be changed for confidentiality if you prefer.

The interviewer is especially interested in noise-induced hearing loss, and "cautionary tales" for others about protecting your hearing.

5TH NATIONAL DEAFNESS SECTOR SUMMIT – MAY 2008



The date has been set for the 5th National Deafness Sector Summit! The Summit will take place in Canberra on 24 and 25 May 2008, immediately following the Audiology Australia conference which is also set for Canberra. Registrations will be in the \$250 range (plus conference dinner) so make sure you put a little allowance in your next year's budget now for the Summit!

SHOWCASE YOUR PRODUCTS AT THE UPCOMING SUMMIT

Want people with hearing loss, their families and loved ones to know more about your products? Then think about showcasing them at the 5th National Deafness Sector Summit in May 2008, a fully accessible conference for people with hearing loss to be held in Canberra 24-25 May 2008.

Contact info@deafnessforum.org.au or visit our website at www.deafnessforum.org.au

HEARING AWARENESS WEEK 2007 – POSTERS NOW READY



Hearing Awareness Week will be here before you know it, 19-25 August 2007. Posters are now available. Check the Hearing Awareness Week website www.hearingawarenessweek.org.au to register your event and request posters.

Sponsorship packages are available. Please contact the office if you want to get national exposure for your products/services through Hearing Awareness Week.

2007 CAPTIONING AWARDS



The Captioning Awards will be held in Hearing Awareness Week to provide a nationally focused event during HAW. Save Thursday 23 August in your diary (in Sydney).

This year the Awards are expanding to recognise captioning in a range of other industries and events: this means new categories of awards. To sponsor this highly successful and fun night out, contact our office.

YOUR CHANCE TO NOMINATE YOUR FAVOURITE CAPTIONING FOR AN AWARD!!!!

The 2007 Captioning Awards will introduce a new category this year: the Members' Choice Award. If you want to nominate a program, a station, or an event for the Members' Choice Award, just send an email to our office with details:

- o your name and organization (if applicable)
- o your contact details (mail, email, phone)
- o What you want to nominate – include details eg channel, time, name etc so we can check it out
- o Why (quality, volume, innovation etc)

Votes will be tallied and the final award made at the Captioning Awards in Sydney on 23 August 2007.

CAPTIONING FREE TO AIR TV

AAD and DF have sent a letter to Free TV (representing the Free to Air broadcasters) requesting a new agreement. We will keep members informed of developments in this area.

"Networks are very quick to pass the buck on poor captioning and either blame the consumer (the Deaf/HoH community), their TV sets or the reception they get. I am surprised they haven't blamed Global Warming!"

(Adam Murdey, member, South Australia)

government news

EDUCATION STANDARDS WEBSITE

The website has been designed to help users understand important parts of the DDA Education Standards. Whether you are a person with a disability, an associate of a person with a disability, or a person involved in the delivery of education, this website will help you understand some important parts of the DDA Education Standards. It does not cover the full detail of the DDA Education Standards, just the more important parts of the Standards.

<http://www.ddaedustandards.info/>

sport

EXCITING INFORMATION FOR YOU



See www.austdeafgames.org.au

It contains exciting information on the Australian Deaf Games.

Over 2,300 hits since its release. Please check on a regular basis.

Games Entry Fees and Registration are now available.

Please refer to the Games Website for more information including draft Games Schedule.

Please note: the website is a work in progress and information will be added over the coming weeks and months.

All written correspondence is to go to:

Games Organising Committee
PO Box 173, Annerley QLD 4103

international news

UN CONVENTION ON RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY

Deafness Forum will be represented at a Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) workshop on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability, which will be held in late June 2007.

ACCESS FOR ALL: SEMINAR AND WORKSHOP ON DISABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT



Australian Disability Development Consortium
July 12-13 Melbourne University

The Australian Disability and Development Consortium (ADDC), Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) and the Australian International Health Institute (AIHI) are holding a Seminar and Workshop on Disability and Development on July 12th and 13th at the University of Melbourne. Participants can attend either or both days and the focus will be on capacity building and networking for mainstreaming disability within development activities. Topics and agencies represented will include:

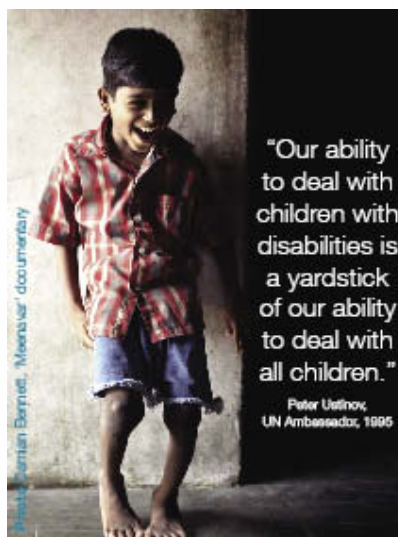
- o The Australian Disability and Development Consortium
- o AusAID's Response to Disability
- o The UN Disability Convention
- o Work with Disabled Peoples Organizations
- o Disability in Indigenous Communities
- o Partnerships in the Pacific
- o Mainstreaming Disability in NGO, Caritas
- o Christian Blind Mission International
- o The World Blind Union
- o Capacity Building for Hearing Impaired in China.

Aimed at development workers, disability specialists, health professional and those interested in disability issues, this is an excellent opportunity to update your knowledge, make new contacts and discuss how Australian agencies

are integrating disability into development work.

To register/further details, contact:

Joni Law
Australian International Health
Institute
The University of Melbourne
jycl@unimelb.edu.au
Ph: 8344 1646



community news

MEDIA RELEASE – SIGN POST NOMINATED FOR FOUR ANTENNA AWARDS

8th May 2007

Australian Association of the Deaf (AAD) is delighted with the announcement that SignPost, our Deaf TV program broadcast on Community TV in Sydney, Perth and Adelaide has been nominated for four (4) Antenna Awards, the national Community TV awards.

SignPost is a magazine style program that covers a variety of stories relating to the Deaf community and its culture and is presented in the language of the Australian Deaf Community – Auslan. The program is also open captioned and has voice overs, ensuring access for all Australians.

The program has been nominated for an award in the following four categories:

- o Best Male Presenter – Todd Wright
- o Producer of the Year – Andy Carmichael
- o Program of the Year – SignPost
- o Best Program that Promotes Community Harmony and Diversity – SignPost

"This is an outstanding achievement for a new initiative by volunteers who very generously give their time and talent to AAD. We are incredibly proud of and grateful to our SignPost team," said AAD President Kyle Miers.

SignPost is produced by AAD's National Deaf TV Sub-committee (NDTV), which is a team of dedicated Deaf and hearing people who volunteer their time and expertise to AAD. In 2006 the SignPost team received valuable support when Australian Communication Exchange donated filming and editing equipment for their use.

The first episode of SignPost was broadcast on TV Sydney (TVS – a community TV channel) in April 2006 and since then 7 episodes have been broadcast, including SignPost Extra which showcased a documentary about the New Zealand Sign Language Bill passed in 2006.

The aim of NDTV is to have regular Deaf TV programming on national television in Auslan (Australian Sign Language), with captions and voice-overs to make it accessible for everyone.

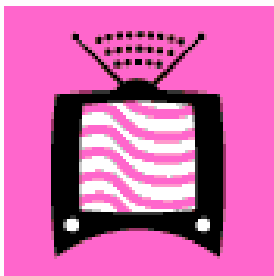
Sign Language has been in Australia since the time of the early British settlers, yet there is still no major free to air TV program in Auslan for Deaf Australians, their families and friends, and other interested people.

upcoming events

MAY 2007			
Mon 21 May - Tue 22 May (2 day seminar)	Advanced Auditory-Verbal Therapy - Auditory-Based Learning For Children Who Are Deaf And Hard Of Hearing Presented by: Dr Ellen Rhoades, Ed.S., Cert. AVT	Renwick Centre, RIDBC (Sydney)	The Renwick Centre Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children Private Bag 29 Parramatta 2124 Fax: (02) 9873 1614 Email: cpe@ridbc.org.au
JUNE 2007			
Wed 6 Jun (2.00 - 4.00pm)	Auditory System and Hearing Impairment Presented by: Genelle Cook, Audiologist, Jim Patrick Audiology Centre,	Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children (Sydney)	The Renwick Centre Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children Private Bag 29 Parramatta 2124 Fax: (02) 9873 1614 Email: cpe@ridbc.org.au
JULY 2007			
6-8 Jul	Conference of Aus & NZ Educators of the Deaf 'Down Under and Leading the World' Hosted by National Association of Australian Teachers of the Deaf (Inc)	Hobart TAS	Email: gcolloff@aapt.net.au Web: www.anzced2007.com.au
AUGUST 2007			
19-25 Aug	Hearing Awareness Week	Nation-wide	Email: info@deafnessforum.org.au Web: www.hearingawarenessweek.org.au
23 Aug	Captioning Awards	Sydney	Email: info@deafnessforum.org.au Web: www.deafnessforum.org.au
SEPTEMBER 2007			
4-7 Sep	Hear, Speak, Live Conference It is hosted by the Deadly Ears Team - the Statewide Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Ear Health Program (RCH - Brisbane)	Gold Coast, Queensland	Bonny Marsh Deadly Ears - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ear Health Program Community Child Health Service 184 St Paul's Terrace SPRING HILL Qld 4002 Email: RCH-deadlyears@health.qld.gov.au

			Fax: 07 3250 8509
OCTOBER 2007			
14 Oct	Deafness Forum AGM	Melbourne	Email: info@deafnessforum.org.au Web: www.deafnessforum.org.au
MAY 2008			
24-25 May	5 th National Deafness Sector Summit	Canberra	Email: info@deafnessforum.org.au Web: www.deafnessforum.org.au

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT ABOUT CAPTIONING ON FREE TO AIR TV



Deafness Forum often receives information from members about captioning that viewers feel is inadequate or of poor quality. Deafness Forum is unable to progress individual complaints for a number of reasons:

- Lack of information about the event (an email saying “the captioning on Channel x was really bad last night” is not sufficient for a complaint)
- We have probably not seen the instance ourselves, so are unable to provide enough details to make a complaint
- Lack of resources in our office (we undertake systemic advocacy but are not funded, and therefore not resourced, to take up individual complaints)

We recommend the following course of events if you want to complain about captions:

1. Keep a pen and paper near where you usually watch TV, in case you want to make notes. You can put them next to your glass of chardonnay and the remote control!
2. If an instance occurs where you feel you want to complain, write down the details (time, show, channel, type of complaints eg too much time lag, no captions when advertised with captions, poor captioning eg used xx word when it should have been yy).etc)
3. Quickly check your TV set to ensure it is not a reception problem eg change to a different channel and see if the captions are working there
4. Go to www.mediaaccess.org.au and click on the link to Complaints in the left hand menu, and register your complaint. Different stations have different guidelines for complaints – some want a fax, some a phone call, some in a letter. The Media Access website will automatically send your complaint in the format requested by that channel. This is important because the Broadcasting Services Act 1992 requires that complaints be made in writing to the station in the first instance.
5. The station then has 60 days to provide you with an adequate response.
6. If the station does not provide you with an adequate response within that timeframe, you can go to www.acma.gov.au and lodge a complaint. ACMA may find that the station is in breach of its code of practice.
7. When you lodge your complaint to ACMA, write to Deafness Forum and tell us that you have done so. Deafness Forum can use your specific examples and complaints in its discussions with the TV stations on captioning quality and other issues.
8. Consider writing at this point to your local Member of Parliament or Senator, and to the Minister for Communications, Helen Coonan, to express your anger over captioning issues.
9. As a final recourse, you can consider a complaint through the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) under the Disability Discrimination Act. This is nowhere near as daunting as you might think, it does not cost you anything (other than your time) and you can withdraw at any time. Deafness Forum can provide you with a template for your complaint to make it easier for you.
10. Keep at it! Nothing changes without some effort from committed (angry) consumers.