



# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2014 - 2015

Deafness Forum of Australia is the peak, national not for profit organisation that provides balanced and actionable advice to the government and opposition on strategic policy development and reform to benefit the one in six Australians who have a hearing impairment, a chronic disorder of the ear, are Deaf or deafblind, and the families who support them.

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ABN 49 008 587 611



## FROM THE CHAIR OF DEAFNESS FORUM OF AUSTRALIA

The organisation that I am privileged to chair is the national voice for 4 million Australians living with hearing health and well-being issues, including people who have a hearing impairment, a chronic ear disorder, people who are Deaf or deafblind, and the families who support them.

The word "forum" in our name is important. Deafness Forum was created more than two decades ago to be a national consultative body and a conduit to the Australian Government on the issues in our community sector.

In a busy year, we continued to meet with our national leaders to raise issues and to express your concerns and hopes. We advised politicians on matters of public policy that would benefit both the people we represent and the nation as a whole. We provided advice to government on employment issues and providing hearing accessibility in government shopfronts.

We worked in partnership with ten other disability organisations under the banner of Disability Australia consortium to contribute to common messages and to add weight to those issues of specific concern to our community sector.

And throughout all of this heightened level of activity, we kept close control on the business. We spent frugally and progressively reduced operational costs to provide optimal value for our members both now and into an uncertain future.

Our thanks go to the finance committee Alex Phillips and Peter Miller, and our CEO for their diligent management of our resources.

I would like to thank all the directors, past and current, for their dedication to the Forum, and for standing with me during this challenging time.

I'd like to mention Sven Topp who completes his term as a director of Deafness Forum of Australia at this meeting. We have been very fortunate to have someone of Sven's intellect and experience

as a member of the board for the past two years. Sven was also our deafblind representative and I am pleased to acknowledge that he has ensured that the voice of deafblind Australians was heard.

I wish to offer my appreciation to all of our consumer member organisations. I know you rely on volunteers who put in countless and sometimes thankless hours. You make a very real difference and I wonder what Australia would be like without your volunteer spirit – certainly much the poorer.

I thank our CEO Steve Williamson and his group of expert advisers and contractors, who in the company of volunteers throughout Australia, have made invaluable contributions through acts large and small.

We are blessed with passionate people in our sector, and I hope that we can come together to direct that passion to what I see as a game changing strategy. It is clear that hearing health must become a mainstream health issue. For too long, it has been overlooked by the health system. There is a compelling need for a more comprehensive approach to hearing services in this country.

For 22 years, Deafness Forum of Australia has been funded by Australian governments to be the people's voice. We are uncertain if the government will continue to fund the organisation and many other national advocacy groups in 2016.

It's a challenging time ahead. But so long as we exist, we shall leave no stone unturned in our joint efforts to make a better life for the one in six Australians we represent.

Looking to the future, it is clear that hearing health must become a mainstream health issue. For too long, it has been overlooked by the health system. The burden of disease from hearing impairment is greater than three of the current National Health Priority Areas in Australia. There is a compelling need for a more comprehensive approach to hearing services. I encourage our members and friends throughout Australia to join us in a campaign for Hearing to become Australia's next National Health Priority.

Yours sincerely



David Brady

Chair

## ACTIVITIES, EVENTS

Deafness Forum hosted a national summit for senior executives and marketing professionals in May 2015 to develop a strategy and a corporate funding base for making hearing health an Australian Government National Health Priority Area.



Summit participants included representatives of National Acoustic Laboratories, Australian Federation of Deaf Societies, Hear and Say, Widex Australia, Australian Hearing, Conexus Foundation, Ai-Media, Deaf Services Queensland, Better Hearing Australia, Attune Hearing, Starkey Australia, Deaf Society of New South Wales, I Hear clinics, Cochlear Ltd., and Deafness Forum of Australia.

## **POSITION STATEMENTS, SUBMISSIONS, VIEWS**

More at <http://www.deafnessforum.org.au/index.php/issues>



### **Willing to Work: National Inquiry into Employment Discrimination Against Older Australians and Australians with Disability**

The current 'Willing to Work' inquiry, conducted by the Age and Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Susan Ryan AO, focussed on obstacles faced by older persons and persons with disabilities in actively participating in the workforce. Deafness Forum submitted to the inquiry its views on dismantling barriers to employment participation for the people we represent.



### **Recommendations for improvements to Employment Assistance Fund**

The Government's Employment Assistance Fund (EAF) was established to "...help people with disability and mental health conditions by providing financial assistance to purchase a range of work related modifications and services for people who are about to start a job or who are currently working, as well as those who require assistance to find and prepare for work."

Deafness Forum recommended a suite of improvements including a generic EAF assessment to people with a disability before they commence or seek employment; flexibility to meet other work-related requirements of recipients; expansion to become accessible to people who are hearing impaired or Deaf who wish to undertake volunteer or community work as a way of enhancing their skills and experience and making them more employable in the future; increased EAF support funding for applicants who are promoted to management positions to ensure that there are no artificial caps that restrict the career advancement opportunities; and tax advantages for employers who supplement an EAF entitlement from company funds to ensure individuals do not miss out on meetings, training and other opportunities that hearing colleagues are afforded.



## FUTURE of HEARING SERVICES in Australia

The Government will move some client groups from the Australian Government Hearing Services Program to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

The group most affected by this change is hearing impaired and Deaf children and their families. Australian Hearing is currently the sole provider of services to these clients.

This will happen regardless of the outcome of the Government's investigations into a potential sale of Australian Hearing.

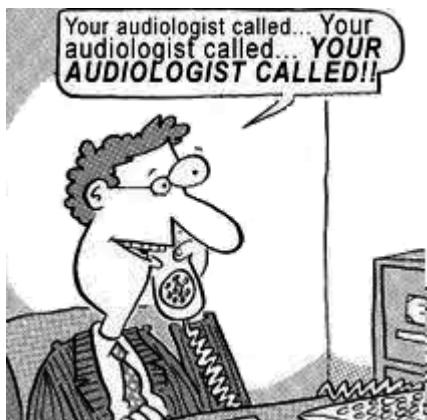
Additionally, the Government is still to make a decision regarding the sale of Australian Hearing. If the sale proceeds and the new owner decides to withdraw from providing services to the more costly and challenging client groups, then the safety net of the Government Provider will be lost. Deafness Forum developed a suite of Fact Sheets and a paper outlining the issues that need to be addressed in the transition plan.



## Unwelcome change to Veterans' hearing health entitlements

Australians who live with a hearing loss as a result of their military service have lost their right in civilian life to receive a proper level of hearing services.

As a result of a review of military compensation arrangements, Veterans with long term hearing needs have been switched to a Repatriation Health Card. They receive their hearing services under the Australian Government Hearing Services Program and receive only a base-level hearing aid at no cost. To access the correct level of technology to suit their individual hearing needs they must now make a personal payment to bridge the gap.



## National Practice Standards for Audiology

The Office of Hearing Services (part of the Health Department) will facilitate the development of national practice standards in Audiology. The process is supported by an Audiology Expert Reference Group. Deafness Forum of Australia is a member of the Expert Reference Group.



## Changes to TV captions regulations

Deafness Forum of Australia provided comment on the Broadcasting and Other Legislation Amendment Deregulation Bill. This is the law that relates to captioning.

Proposed changes, in our opinion overwhelmingly benefited TV broadcasters but disadvantaged consumers by weakening reporting rules that safeguard quality captioning services.

A Senate Inquiry did not agree and found that the Government should proceed with the changes.



### **Hearing care for hospital patients**

Enrolled Nurses are employed in a wide range of nursing fields and can be influential in recognising the needs of people in their care who are Deaf or live with a hearing difficulty.

Deafness Forum made key recommendations to a review of the curriculum for the Diploma in Nursing for Enrolled Nurses.

Communication access needs to be adequately identified in appropriate parts of the curriculum. Communication access needs to be presented as an integral part of nursing care, particularly for our increasing elderly community.



### **Hearing crisis in Australia's Aged Care system**

More than 3.5 million Australians are expected to use aged care services each year by 2050.

70 percent of these people have hearing loss, but the staff who care for them are seldom trained to assist. The result is wide-spread under-recognition and under-management of the issues in both community and residential aged care settings.

With the endorsement of the Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council, Deafness Forum of Australia developed teaching and learning resources.



## **Safer buildings**

A proposed change to the Australian Building Codes with the aim of reducing false alarms resulting in unnecessary Fire Brigade attendances was opposed by Deafness Forum of Australia.

The change would have meant that some buildings, such as hotels would no longer require installation of monitored smoke detectors. A Deaf or hearing impaired person could be overcome by smoke and fumes before the heat detector or the sprinkler system were activated.

Deafness Forum of Australia, AFAC representing the various Fire Brigades, the Australian Protection Association of Australia and Standards Australia advised that the benefit would be outweighed by dangers to personal safety.

As a result, the proposal to change the Building Code of Australia to install smoke alarms in place of smoke detectors was withdrawn. The current requirements will remain in force.



## **Public rail wants exemptions from disability discrimination laws**

The Australian Human Rights Commission is considering an application by Australasian Railway Association (ARA) for exemptions under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002 and Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010. The ARA is a peak industry body representing railway operators in Australia.

The application relates to exemptions from compliance with parts of the Transport Standards for a maximum allowable period of five years “to ensure compliance requirements can be practically implemented”.

Deafness Forum opposed the application for an extension. Its view is that overall, Hearing Augmentation is poorly understood by transport entities.



### **On-demand, real time captions and interpreters in Government shopfronts**

Deafness Forum has advocated since early 2012 the need for on-demand captions and Auslan interpreting services to improve customers' interactions at Australian Government service shopfronts, such as Centrelink, Medicare and NDIS offices, etc.

A welcome result of this advocacy was that Centrelink initiated a trial project. The outcome of this trial has yet to be made public.

Our objective is for all Government shopfronts to have designated facilities that provide equitable communication access.



### **Replacement speech processors for pensioners aged over 26 years**

*Addressing the inequity of Age and Disability pensioners who are denied Government support for replacement cochlear speech processors*

Age and Disability Pensioners who have cochlear implants and are eligible for the Australian Government's Hearing Services Program are denied the appropriate, reliable technology through the Government which they depend on for social inclusion, productivity, independence and quality of life.

These "Eligible Persons" under the Hearing Services Administration Act 1997, are not provided with replacement cochlear speech processors.

This inconsistency impacts the most significantly impaired and financially vulnerable cochlear implant recipient group. It can be readily addressed at little cost to Government.



## **Inclusion in education**

All children in Australia have the right to an inclusive education. However, there are many barriers to the realisation of this right in the lived experience of children and families.

Current efforts towards upholding the rights of all children are impeded by a lack of understanding of inclusive education and misappropriation of the term.

Teaching and acquiring literacy is vital for children with reduced hearing acuity and those whose native language is Australian Sign Language. Literacy is the ability to read, write and to apply critical thinking skills to the written word.

Deafness Forum of Australia has contributed the views of its members and constituents to work undertaken by Children with Disability Australia, a national not for profit organisation that advocates on key issues common to children and families across the disability spectrum.

It noted that the current education system in Australia is failing to adequately meet the needs of students with disability - the breadth of disadvantage students with disability must contend with in the current education system is profound. Failings have become entrenched in the education system and the urgency of delivering system wide solutions is now acute.



## **Deaf culture is rich in language, the arts and community**

"The concept of "Deaf gain" not "hearing loss" and conveying the message to wider society that it's OK to be Deaf!" These are the words of Drisana Levitzke-Gray, Young Australian of the Year 2015.

"We must take action to improve access to Auslan for Deaf children in infancy, support hearing families in their efforts to learn it, expect educational institutions to embrace Auslan as a viable first language for Deaf children, and promote it as a valuable second language for LOTE (Language other than English) teaching in schools to hearing children too."

The Government can implement:

- Provision of information to new parents (and ongoing support) about the benefits of introducing Deaf children to Auslan
- Elective study of Auslan in school curricula
- Government and business shopfronts, health and welfare services to provide real-time Auslan interpreting and captioning services for customers, which would have flow-on effect in corporate Australia
- Inclusion of Auslan and captions in electronic government communications, which would set the standard for commercial businesses

### **Communication access**

The support of strong, accredited Auslan interpreting and captioning services sectors is crucial. There are established Australian companies that can provide these services, both on-site and remotely via the internet. However, there is a shortage of qualified interpreters. Captioning, a growing service industry, would benefit from professional development programs and standards.

### **Literacy**

Teaching and acquiring literacy is vital. Literacy is the ability to read, write and to apply critical thinking skills to the written word. Quality deaf education in the early years is crucial to living a fulfilling life that embraces language in all of its forms.



### **Fair and equitable access to justice**

Equality and justice will not be served until all participants in a court's proceedings know every word that is spoken by every other participant.

All courtrooms should have consistently functioning hearing loops and be responsive to needs to provide appropriately qualified and certified Australian Sign Language interpreters.

People who are otherwise eligible for jury duty but come from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds such as those whose first language is Australian Sign Language should not be denied their right to serve.



## **Abolish an unnecessary government charge**

*Remove the medical gateway in the Australian Government Hearing Services Program*

The Australian Government Hearing Services Voucher Program requires eligible people to complete an application (a paper form or electronic) and have a medical referral in order to access the Program.

Deafness Forum advised the Office of Hearing Services that the removal of the medical gateway would have positive benefits for consumers and hearing services providers. It would reduce the time for consumers to access a hearing assessment; and remove an administrative requirement for

Providers which is consistent with the Government's focus on deregulation in order to remove unnecessary administrative burdens on business.

Office of Hearing Services would ensure the recommendation was included for consideration in the Government's program of reducing red tape.

## **PARTICIPATION IN FORUMS, ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

Deafness Forum was represented via its volunteer members and directors on the following committees:

- Accessible Cinema Advisory Group Standing Committee on Disability Issues
- Australian Electoral Commission disability group
- Australian Federation of Disability Organisations: board member and voting representative attended all meetings and telcos
- Australian Hearing Paediatric Advisory Committee
- Australian Network on Disability
- Australian Subscription Television and Radio Association – participation in consumer feedback focus group focussing on captions
- Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development Aviation Access working group
- Emergency Egress Forum
- Libby Harricks Memorial Oration Committee
- Museum of Australian Democracy Disability Reference Group
- Standards Australia Committee FP002 (Fire detection)
- Telstra Disability Forum

## **COLLABORATIONS**

### **Australian Federation of Disability Organisations**

Deafness Forum is a foundation member of the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations and a contributor to its issue papers.

### **Australasian Newborn Hearing Screening Committee**

As a sub-committee of Deafness Forum of Australia, the Australasian Newborn Hearing Screening Committee (ANHSC) continues in its mission of promoting early detection and intervention for all Australian and New Zealand children with permanent hearing loss.

For more than 13 years the ANHSC has acted to promote the establishment of high quality screening programs for the early detection of childhood hearing loss throughout Australasia. Against this ambition, it is particularly pleasing to report that, with the commencement of full public funding of the Newborn Hearing Screening program in private hospitals in Western Australia, the roll-out of programs to cover the populations of all states and territories in all states and territories is now complete. According to the best estimates available to the ANHSC, more than 97% of all children born in Australia are now routinely offered the opportunity for hearing screening at birth. Official data on program coverage and screening completion rates are not currently officially available nationally. The ANHSC continues to advocate for the full implementation of national data gathering and quality assurance procedures in accordance with the National Framework for Neonatal Hearing Screening that was developed by the Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council in collaboration with the ANHSC. At the time of this Annual Report, the ANHSC is, once again, involved in direct advocacy to the Federal Government to secure better national data management and reporting procedures consistent with the stated aims and ambitions of National Framework.

Another of the core aims of the ANHSC is to facilitate discussion and sharing of experience among those concerned with early detection and intervention for permanent childhood hearing impairment in Australasia. Consistent with that aim, the 8<sup>th</sup> Australasian Newborn Hearing Screening Conference ("Screening for the Future") was convened in Sydney from the 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> June. A total of 245 individual participants took part in the conference and associated preconference workshops for audiological professionals over the three days.

The conference presented a wonderful opportunity for the broad range of stakeholders in early detection of hearing loss to discuss trends in screening, hear about national and international initiatives, and participate in thought provoking workshops showcasing the innovative ways in which professionals respond to the challenge of continuing to deliver high quality newborn hearing screening and related programs. The program included keynote presentations by Dr Christie Yoshinaga-Itano and Dr Guy Lightfoot as well as a wide range of presentations about national and international research and practice. Dr Yoshinaga-Itano also provided the 2015 Libby Harricks Memorial Oration. Since 1999, the Deafness Forum's Libby Harricks Memorial Oration series has raised awareness of the key issues relating to hearing impairment.

### **Children with Disability Australia**

Contributed to CDA's issues papers on education; and in matters of concern relating to a potential sale of Australian Hearing.

### **Deaf Australia**

Continued efforts to engage with the organisation, including an invitation to join an expert panel on issues relating to a sale of Australian Hearing.

### **Deaf Services Queensland**

DSQ became a full member of Deafness Forum in 2014.

### **Deaf Sports Australia**

Collaboration on "silent sports" activities in Hearing Awareness Week.

### **Disability Australia**

Deafness Forum is an active member of the consortium.

### **Future of hearing health expert panel**

Deafness Forum created an expert consultative panel to obtain views from throughout its sector.

Members of the panel included Self Help for Hard of Hearing People (SHHH), Parents of Deaf Children NSW, Better Hearing Australia, Royal Institute of Deafblind Children, Australian Deafblind Council, Aussie Deaf Kids, Australian Hearing Paediatric Advisory Committee, and Deaf Australia.

### **Office of Hearing Services, Department of Health**

Deafness Forum was invited to review and endorse the Office of Hearing Services' "Clients Rights and Responsibilities" statement.

### **People with Disability Australia**

Co-opted its support for concerns about impacts of a sale of Australian Hearing. The issue was cited in its budget submission 2015.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

- Fact sheets on accommodation venues
- Business Owners and Managers
- Communicate better with people with hearing loss
- Conductive Hearing Loss brochure
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Hearing Health at risk in the workplace - what employers and employees should know
- Hearing loss is a widespread disability amongst older people
- Heavy Vehicle drivers and hearing loss
- International Deafness Symbol
- Libby Harricks Memorial Oration 2015
- Living with hearing loss
- Noise Destroys
- Protect your ears from loud music

- Protect your hearing
- Protection for your ears
- Swimmer's or Surfer's Ear
- Teachers - Adjustments for students with a hearing impairment
- There are different causes of hearing loss
- Treating hearing impairment
- What is an ear infection?
- What is Meniere's disease? What is Tinnitus?

## PROVISION OF INFORMATION RELEVANT TO MEMBERS, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

### Fortnightly e-newsletter



### MAKE IT NUMBER **10** Make hearing

Australia's 10th National Health Priority



#### Hearing Services Program and the National Disability Insurance Scheme Fact sheet

#### Are audiologists practicing patient centred care?

Studies have furthered our understanding and its application to audiology rehabilitation.

#### Tinnitus research

Tinnitus is the most common service-related disability for veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. One in two combat veterans report having this sometimes debilitating condition.

#### Disability Employment public forums

The Australian Government will review the disability employment system and develop a new National Disability Employment Framework.

#### Hearing a National Health Priority

Deafness Forum of Australia hosted a national summit to develop a strategy for making hearing health a National Health Priority in Australia.

Deafness Forum of Australia

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Currently one in six Australians suffer from some form of hearing loss.

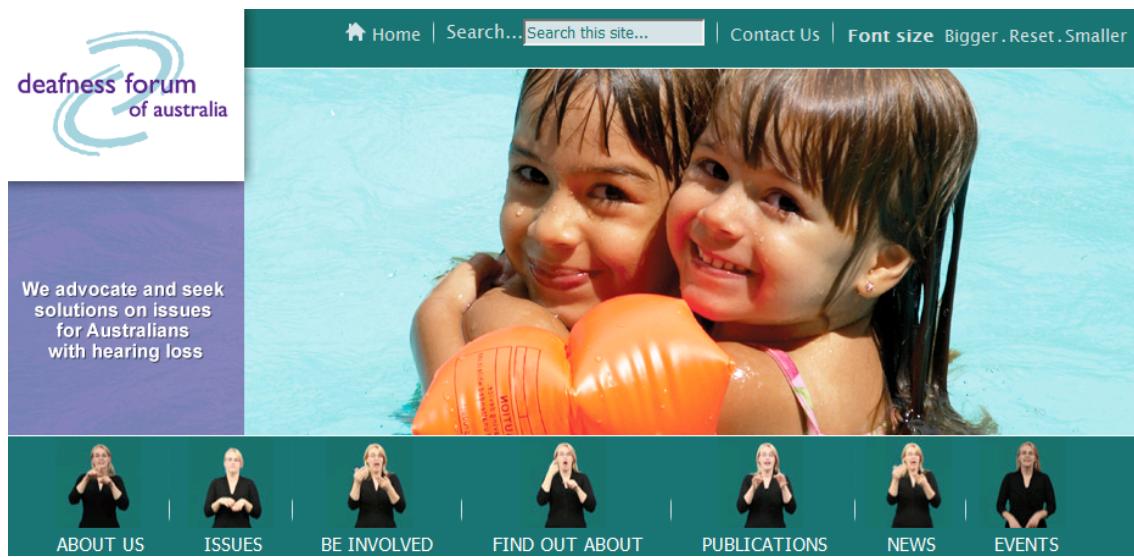
This may increase to one in four by 2050.

Access Economics 2006

We acknowledge the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to elders both past and present. We acknowledge the challenge that faces Indigenous leaders and families to overcome the unacceptably high levels of ear health issues among first Australians.

## Deafness Forum website

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



## Facebook

A screenshot of the Deafness Forum of Australia Facebook page. The page header shows the page name and a search bar. The main content area features a large photo of a group of people smiling and waving their hands. Overlaid on the photo is the text: "MAKE IT NUMBER 100 Make it Possible Australia's 100th Anniversary". The page also displays statistics: 12 Page Likes and 1,431 Post Reach. On the left is the page's profile picture and cover photo. On the right, there are sections for Promote, This Week, Recent posts, and a timeline with links for Timeline, About, Photos, Likes, and More.

# Libby Harricks Memorial Oration



The 2015 Libby Harricks Memorial Oration was delivered by Professor Christie Yoshinaga Itano from the Institute of Cognitive Science, University of Colorado Boulder, US.

Dr. Yoshinaga-Itano is both a teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing and an audiologist. She was the first to demonstrate that when infants with hearing loss are identified in the first few months of life and provided with appropriate intervention services, that 80% these infants/children with significant hearing loss and no additional disabilities are able to maintain age-appropriate language development and intelligible speech in the first five years of life. As a result of this research, universal newborn hearing screening programs were implemented in the United States.

# HEARING awareness WEEK

Hearing Awareness Week, in the last week of August each year, is Australia's annual event to raise community awareness of the fragility of hearing health and ways to protect it.



The awards in October 2014 promoted and encouraged greater frequency and high standards in captioning quality in education and public entertainment.

## **INDIVIDUALS AWARDED LIFE MEMBERSHIP**

Mr John Bartlett  
Mr Stan Batson  
Dr Victor Bear AM  
Dr Harry Blackmore AM  
Mrs Cath Bonnes AM  
Mrs Ruth Fotheringham  
Mrs Diana Hodgetts  
Hon Peter Howson, C.M.G  
Mr Alex Jones  
Mr Peter Lindley  
Dr Leo Murphy, O.B.E  
Mr Robert Quail AM  
Mr Harry Powell  
Mrs Margaret Robertson  
Mr Brian Rope OAM  
Dr Jenny Rosen AM  
Mr Andrew Stewart  
Mr Kenneth W Tribe

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Board of Deafness Forum sets the policy on key issues, based on the consensus of our members. It ensures the organisation is focused on its purpose and strategic objectives, and manages its resources efficiently and effectively for the future.

The composition of the Board reflects the broad nature of the deafness sector. The various life experiences and interests of directors, coupled with the Deafness Forum's activities and consultative processes, ensure the organisation is consumer-driven and with the authority to represent the interests and concerns of the entire deafness sector.

The elected representatives are required to consult with members so that they are informed about members' views when contributing to Board discussions and decision-making processes.

Directors are responsible to act on behalf of all members, not just those that elected them.

In addition to the formal meetings, the Board met on numerous occasions via email and participated in electronic polls on out of session matters.

The Board Executive comprising the chairperson and the two vice-chairs meets via teleconference on a six weekly and/or *as needs* basis.

The Board has a permanent Audit and Finance Committee, and Grievance and Governance committees.

## CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Deafness Forum's governance arrangements are reviewed annually.

- Board Code of Conduct and Ethics
- Governance & Ethics Committee with authority to appoint external advisers
- Policy & procedures to deal with potential conflicts of interest
- Regular reporting on Board meetings performance
- Risk management strategy

In addition to the specific governance documents, the organisation has established policies and procedures in the following areas:

- Communications
- Electronic ballots
- Financial risk management
- Grievances
- Persons holding external representative positions
- Sponsorship
- Travel

## STRATEGIC PLAN

Directors are required to maintain an "up to date, relevant and targeted annual Strategic Plan that clearly communicates what our constituents and major stakeholders want to achieve and how we will achieve it."

The Strategic Plan was reviewed by the Board in February 2015, as it is each year, and was found to be not wanting in respect to the terms and conditions of the current government grant agreement, and its alignment with the government's National Disability Strategy.

The annual workplan was amended to emphasise providing the Government and the community with advice on the potential implications of a sale of Australian Hearing; issues relating to the transition of components of the Australian Government hearing services program to the National Disability Insurance Scheme; inhibitors to employment, and a strategy to make hearing a National Health Priority in Australia.

### Strategic Objectives 2014-17

1. Address impediments in education, training, assistance (accommodations) and negative attitudes that limit full and equitable inclusion in the Australian workforce.

2. Optimise the number of Australians who are hearing impaired, have a chronic ear or balance disorder, are Deaf or deafblind who have access to the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
3. Improve communications access in transport, the workplace, media, public venues and residential care facilities.
4. Raise awareness in the community of hearing, chronic ear and balance disorders to enhance prevention, early intervention and treatment.
5. Advocate informed personal choice for individuals in their decision-making on hearing health options.
6. Encourage national consistency in universal newborn hearing screening.

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Deafness Forum seeks financial support from various sources to supplement its government grant, such as sponsorships, project funding, donations and bequests.

Deafness Forum maintains its financial records in accordance with the recommendations of its Auditor; and lodged all required advice and reports required by law.

The Board of Directors, via its Finance Committee, is provided with comprehensive monthly reports.

Deafness Forum gratefully acknowledges the financial and in-kind support received.

## DONATIONS

We acknowledge the generosity of donors, whose contributions enable us to attain our goals.

Lynden Beaumont  
David Brady  
Elizabeth Burgess  
Leslie Goldmann  
Joan Hansen  
Peter Lowe

Margaret McKenzie  
Linnett Sanchez  
Basil Turner

\$250 - \$1,000  
Anonymous donor  
Anonymous donor  
Anonymous donor  
Anonymous donor  
Gebardi Family

Over \$3,000  
Deafness Forum staff

Over \$10,000  
Reserve Bank NSW Benevolent Fund

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

**Accounting:** Successful Alliances

**Auditor:** Duesburys Nexia

**Constitutional matters**, pro bono: Richard Brading, Principal Solicitor of Wesley Community Legal Service

**Events and media**, pro bono: Robert Weekes, Head of ABC Television Victoria (retired)

**Government relations**, pro bono: Gary Humphries, 1<sup>st</sup> State - retired federal Senator and ACT Chief Minister

**IT support**, pro bono: Blue Arc IT Solutions

**Website hosting and management**, pro bono: Conexu/ Australian Communication Exchange

**Deafness Forum Limited**  
ABN: 49 008 587 611

**Financial Statements**

For the Year Ended 30 June 2015

**Deafness Forum Limited**

ABN: 49 008 587 611

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## **Deafness Forum Limited**

ABN: 49 008 587 611

### **Directors' Report**

**30 June 2015**

The directors present their report on Deafness Forum Limited (the Company) for the financial year ended 30 June 2015.

#### **Directors**

The names of the directors in office at any time during, or since the end of, the year are:

#### **Names**

	<b>Position</b>	<b>Appointed/Resigned</b>
David Nickson Brady	Chairperson	
Rodney Mark Adams	Director	Resigned February 2015
Michelle Joan Courts	Director	Appointed November 2014
David Francis Gibson	Director	Appointed June 2015
Naomi Heather Higgs	Director	Resigned November 2014
Charyse Michelle May	Director	Resigned May 2015
Thomas Forrest McCaul	Director	Appointed November 2014
Peter Allan Miller	Director	
Michele Jan Nealon	Director	Resigned January 2015
Alexander Paul Phillips	Director	
Emma Jane Scanlan	Director	Resigned November 2014
Beatrice Mary Tarnawski	Director	
Sven Topp	Director	

Directors have been in office since the start of the financial year to the date of this report unless otherwise stated.

#### **Company secretary**

The following person held the position of company secretary at the end of the financial year:

Stephen Lindsay Williamson JP (Chief Executive Officer)

#### **Information on directors**

David Nickson Brady      Chairperson

David was born with a profound hearing loss. He was raised in the country town of Armidale, New England, NSW and remains a passionate New Englander, involving himself in issues in his home region and in broader regional Australia.

David is a mentor for young people whose hearing experience is different to others in the community. He is also a passionate sportsman: he represented Australia at the 2005 Deaflympic Games in Water Polo.

David has a Master of Science and Graduate Diploma in Project Management.

He is the chief executive of Hear For You, a not-for-profit organisation in the deafness sector.

## **Deafness Forum Limited**

ABN: 49 008 587 611

### **Directors' Report**

**30 June 2015**

#### **Information on directors (continued)**

##### Rodney Mark Adams

Rodney joined the Board of Deafness Forum in 2011. He has worked in deaf education with the NSW Department of Education and Communities for 18 years as a teacher of the deaf in a wide variety of settings and believes that Quality Teaching should also be implemented with all deaf and hearing impaired children.

Rodney believes that all school age students should have the opportunity to learn Auslan as a valid subject as part of the National Curriculum regardless of whether they are hearing or deaf. A National Auslan curriculum would provide deaf and hearing impaired students the opportunity to make a smoother transition into the deaf world, if so desired, as well as developing hearing students pathways into interpreting.

##### Michelle Joan Courts

Michelle is a mother of two sons, one of whom experienced unilateral hearing loss at the age of seven. A Registered Nurse, Michelle holds a Master & Bachelor of Nursing and a Diploma in Management. She specialised in Paediatric and Community nursing, with a sound understanding of the disability sector and the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. She has worked in community aged care, specialising in supporting individuals at home with health and social engagement taking a social view of health and welfare. She is an employee of TAFE South Australia and a member of the Australian Hearing Paediatric Advisory Committee. She is passionate about improving the lived experiences of individuals by identifying and focusing on abilities while minimising limitations.

##### David Francis Gibson

David is a former Queensland parliamentarian. He served as the Member for Gympie from 2006 until January 2015.

He had raised the issue of Hearing Health in the Queensland Parliament on numerous occasions and has had academic articles published on disability engagement in the democratic process.

David joined the Australian Army in 1986 and held a variety of roles as a logistics officer before embarking on a career in media marketing and management with APN newspapers.

He has served on the boards of Bundaberg Region Ltd, Mary Valley Community Trust Ltd and as Chair of the Mary Valley Economic Development Advisory Group. He is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and currently serves on the board of directors for Deaf Services Queensland as the Chair of the Audit Committee; and the Gympie Music Muster as Executive Director.

## **Deafness Forum Limited**

ABN: 49 008 587 611

### **Directors' Report**

**30 June 2015**

#### **Information on directors (continued)**

##### **Naomi Heather Higgs**

Naomi has two sons, the oldest of whom was left profoundly deaf after meningitis at age 2. Naomi has always lived in South Australia, completing a Bachelor of Science, working in a range of roles including quality control in the biotechnology industry and most recently laboratory manager in a secondary school.

After her son lost his hearing, Naomi completed a Graduate Certificate in Education (Special Education) and began her involvement in supporting and advocating for parents of children with a hearing loss. This has included chairing the management committee of the preschool which had a reverse integration preschool program, the presidency of the state based parent group and most recently a parent representative role on the Board of Deafness Forum. Naomi is also co-founder of the successful online discussion forum CI Circle.

Naomi has a passion for parental advocacy – which started around 18 years ago and is still ongoing. She is committed to ensuring parents are empowered to make the choices for their child based upon his/her needs and that parental choice is respected.

##### **Charyse Michelle May**

Charyse married into a family with numerous members who have severe to profound hearing losses and developed a passion for the provision of high quality services for people with a hearing impairment and those who identify themselves as Deaf.

Charyse has worked voluntarily as a carer of children with multiple disabilities. She studied Auslan and Deaf studies and has a good understanding of the cultural diversity of this group, as well as having extensive experience in the education, training and support of those who choose oral communication.

A clinical Audiometrist, Charyse spent 6 years working in and managing a private Audiological practice that specialised in complex hearing conditions in both children and adults.

##### **Thomas Forrest McCaul**

Tom McCaul Ph.D. was born deaf and was a recipient of bilateral cochlear implants. He has a scientific background working in Australia, the USA and United Kingdom. In the past two decades he has worked in organisations that provide wide ranging services to Deaf people and people with a hearing impairment.

He served on the board of Queensland Deaf Society (now Deaf Services Queensland); and was a chairman of Better Hearing Australia (BHA) Victoria and president of BHA National.

He brings to Deafness Forum strong credentials in strategic policy development on behalf of many Australians whose interests and views we support and represent.

## **Deafness Forum Limited**

ABN: 49 008 587 611

### **Directors' Report**

**30 June 2015**

#### **Information on directors (continued)**

##### **Peter Allan Miller**

Peter joined the Board of Deafness Forum in October 2010. After losing his hearing as a very young child Peter completed his education through deaf and mainstream schools and university, completing Bachelors and Masters degrees in Electronics Engineering and Master of Business Administration.

Peter's educational and work experiences subsequently fuelled a lifelong passion and belief that equity of access to telecommunications, social and education services is vital for the deaf and hearing impaired communities and for which is best achieved through the delivery of services that are used and accepted by the wider community. Over the past 21 years Peter has been Director and Chair of the Board of Australian Communication Exchange (ACE), Director of Deaf Resources Australia (DRA) and President/Vice President of Deaf Education Network. In appreciation of his efforts, Peter is a life member of Australian Communication Exchange and the Deaf Society of NSW. He represents Deafness Forum on the board of Australian Federation of Disability Organisations.

Peter is employed by Telstra with accountabilities in assessing how well Telstra delivers its products and services to customers, giving him a strong understanding of how products are used by customers.

##### **Michele Jan Nealon**

Michele lives with a congenital severe hearing impairment and an ongoing ear disorder.

She has been a volunteer member of the management committee for the Australian Centre for Disability Law, advocate for the Deafness Council of NSW, member of the Disability Council of NSW and worked with the National Relay Service in community education, training and customer service.

Michele completed a Masters in Community Management in 2011. She is currently a postgraduate student at RIDBC Renwick Centre, a centre for research and professional education administered by the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children in affiliation with the University of Newcastle. Her research started taking shape in 2012 and the focus is "Hearing Impairment in the Workplace: a User's Perspective of Barriers and Accommodations."

## **Deafness Forum Limited**

ABN: 49 008 587 611

### **Directors' Report**

**30 June 2015**

#### **Information on directors (continued)**

##### Alexander Paul Phillips

Alexander was born profoundly deaf. With little success with powerful hearing aids, he received a Cochlear Implant at three and a half years of age.

The success of his Cochlear Implant enabled him to attend mainstream schooling and university where he completed a bachelor and master's degree in Economics, Finance and Accounting. The journey was not without its challenges. He experienced a difficult time with social inclusion and teachers who lacked understanding of the impact of hearing impairment on access to education.

Alexander is determined to ensure that deaf and hearing impaired people are empowered to achieve their potential and enjoy the same quality of life afforded to hearing people. His first opportunity to contribute to this goal was the co-founding a youth mentoring group with three other hearing impaired people known as WHISPA (Web of Hearing Impaired Students and Peer Alliance). He maintains his enthusiasm for promoting full access and equal opportunity for young deaf people. He works for an accounting firm specialising in insolvency.

##### Emma Jane Scanlan

Emma was elected to the Board of Deafness Forum in October 2010. Emma is an Audiologist and has worked in the paediatric and adult areas for many years. She has managed policy and practice for clients who have severe and profound hearing loss, have poor communication ability or have other impairments in addition to hearing loss. Emma has a strong interest in ensuring that appropriate services are available to all people who may require them. Her main areas of interest have been in improving communication outcomes for all hearing impaired and deaf people and working in remote indigenous communities.

Emma represented Deafness Forum on the Disability Advisory Committee, Emergency Egress Forum, and Libby Harricks Memorial Oration Committee.

##### Beatrice Mary Tarnawski

Beatrice was diagnosed with the ear disorder Ménière's Disease in 2007, but experienced endolymphatic hydrops on and off four years earlier. She has unilateral hearing loss, tinnitus and vestibular damage, so in addition to hearing impairment Beatrice is challenged by an ever present sensation of disequilibrium. It is this balance dysfunction and its associated symptoms that she most wishes to highlight as she represents ear disorders on the executive board.

Beatrice is a committee member of Meniere's Australia Inc. (MA), a non-profit NGO that supports people living with Ménière's Disease and other vestibular conditions. Her main role at MA has been the implementation of social media and assistance with communications.

Possessing a flair for idea generation and design, Beatrice has worked as an advertising creative for Saatchi & Saatchi, Y&R, McCann Erikson and DDB. A portfolio careerist, she is currently a company director for a commercial property management and development business. She also has an interest in fashion design.

## **Deafness Forum Limited**

ABN: 49 008 587 611

### **Directors' Report**

**30 June 2015**

#### **Information on directors (continued)**

Sven Topp

Deafblind since the age of 15, Sven received graduation awards in Computer Science and Business Studies. He deferred his university entry to manage his own information technology company for a year, providing technical support and also becoming a client representative for a disability employment agency. During this time he undertook committee management training.

Completing a degree in 2013 in Computer Science (specialising in Human Computer Interfaces and Haptics) with a distinction average, he continues his study into Honours and to develop Tactile/Haptic devices to assist Deafblind individuals with communication.

For 20 years, Sven was involved with the Australian Deafblind Council in various roles and as its President; and in international representation.

His core goals continue to be working toward a better life for Deafblind individuals in Australia, increasing their public profile and profile of the organisations that represent them.

#### **Principal activities**

The principal activities of Deafness Forum Limited during the financial year were to:

- Represent the needs of its constituents to government, business and community at large.
- Stage events and activities that bring profile to the needs of our constituents.

No significant changes in the nature of these activities occurred during the financial year.

#### **Objectives and strategies**

Deafness Forum of Australia is the national voice for 4 million Australians and their families living with hearing health & well-being issues.

Deafness Forum has a broad membership base in all states and territories comprising individual consumers, consumer associations, individual service providers and service provider associations.

Deafness Forum provides the Government with access to both systemic and specific advice. It is closely connected to the 'grass roots' in its sector, to ensure Government is aware of both individual and social perspectives. It:

- Represents and promotes the health and wellbeing of people who are hearing impaired, deaf, deafblind or have a chronic ear disorder, and their families, through national consultations, information sharing and advocacy.
- Is a forum for organisations and individuals to promote these interests; and a conduit to service providers, the wider health and disability sectors, and the community.
- Encourages, conducts or aids relevant research and sharing of knowledge and experience.
- Advises the Government on strategic policy development and reform.

#### **Achievements**

There have been a number of key activities during the year.

#### **Submissions**

- Future of hearing services in Australia
  - Community Service Obligations program and the NDIS
  - Potential sale of Australian Hearing
- Unwelcome changes to Veterans' hearing health entitlements
- Hearing care for hospital patients
- Changes to TV captions regulations
- Improving Employment Participation for people in the deafness sector
- Hearing crisis in Aged Care
- Safer buildings
- National Disability Insurance Scheme

# **Deafness Forum Limited**

ABN: 49 008 587 611

## **Directors' Report**

**30 June 2015**

### **Events**

- Australian Captioning Awards
- Libby Harricks Memorial Oration
- National Hearing Awareness Week

### **Measurement of performance**

The Company undertakes ongoing reviews of performance to evaluate its achievements regarding:

- Leadership - engaging with government and within the sector to strengthen our combined influence.
- Systemic advocacy - encouraging broad awareness and responses in the community aimed at enhancing the rights and welfare of our constituents.
- Stating the Company's views with Position Statements that endorse Deafness Forum of Australia's impartiality, authority and knowledge of the sector.
- Partnering and Collaboration – strengthening the Company's alliance with other agencies within the sector to reinforce opportunities for strategic partnering and collaboration.

### **Operating Result**

The surplus of the Company for the financial year amounted to \$814 (2014: surplus of \$6,168).

### **Members guarantee**

Deafness Forum Limited is a company limited by guarantee. In the event of, and for the purpose of winding up of the company, the amount capable of being called up from each member and any person or association who ceased to be a member in the year prior to the winding up, is limited to \$10 per member, subject to the provisions of the Company's constitution.

### **Meetings of directors**

During the financial year, 5 meetings of directors were held. Attendances by each director during the year were as follows:

	<b>Directors' Meetings</b>	
	<b>Number eligible to attend</b>	<b>Number attended</b>
David Nickson Brady	5	5
Rodney Mark Adams	4	3
Michelle Joan Courts	3	3
David Francis Gibson	1	1
Naomi Heather Higgs	2	1
Charyse Michelle May	4	4
Thomas Forrest McCaul	3	3
Peter Allan Miller	5	5
Michele Jan Nealon	4	4
Alexander Paul Phillips	5	5
Emma Jane Scanlan	2	1
Beatrice Mary Tarnawski	5	4
Sven Topp	5	-

Sven Topp relocated to France to pursue studies in his field of interest, Human Computer Interfaces and Haptics. He remained an active director of the Company. He participated in all electronic discussions and ballots throughout the year and offered inputs to matters discussed at each board meeting in absentia.

**Deafness Forum Limited**

ABN: 49 008 587 611

**Directors' Report**

**30 June 2015**

**Auditor's independence declaration**

The auditor's independence declaration in accordance with subdivision 60-40 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012, for the year ended 30 June 2015, has been received and can be found on page 9 of the financial report.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors:



Director:.....



Director:.....

Dated: 23 November 2015

**AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION  
UNDER SUBSECTION 60-40 OF THE AUSTRALIAN CHARITIES AND NOT-FOR-PROFITS  
COMMISSION ACT 2012 TO THE DIRECTORS OF  
DEAFNESS FORUM LIMITED**

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2015 there have been no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.



Duesburys Nexia  
Canberra, 23 November 2015



G J Murphy  
Partner

**Deafness Forum Limited**

ABN: 49 008 587 611

**Statement of Comprehensive Income  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2015**

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
<b>Revenue</b>		
Events and project income	14,909	28,084
Grants	197,374	208,935
Interest received	4,326	5,311
Memberships	24,377	15,845
Sponsorship	41,800	91,561
Other	20,781	14,822
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	303,567	364,558
 <b>Expenses</b>		
Accounting, contractors and audit fees	38,786	24,990
Consultancy fees	-	3,023
Depreciation	474	961
Employee administration, travel and accommodation	24,752	44,042
Employee wages and entitlements (excluding superannuation)	109,883	137,114
Hearing loops	746	-
Interpretation expenses	13,535	24,065
Office expenses	44,117	55,708
Project expenses, venue and equipment hire	58,759	56,752
Publication expenses	182	250
Superannuation	11,519	11,485
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Surplus for the year	814	6,168
Total comprehensive income	<hr/>	<hr/>
	814	6,168

**Deafness Forum Limited**

ABN: 49 008 587 611

**Statement of Financial Position**  
**As At 30 June 2015**

		2015	2014
	Note	\$	\$
<b>ASSETS</b>			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	2	207,767	44,118
Trade and other receivables	3	810	-
Other financial assets	4	82,265	152,351
Other assets	5	5,162	22,740
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		<u>296,004</u>	<u>219,209</u>
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Plant and equipment	6	686	1,160
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		<u>686</u>	<u>1,160</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>296,690</u>	<u>220,369</u>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	7	40,509	23,233
Other liabilities	8	89,255	18,390
Provisions	9	5,530	18,654
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>135,294</u>	<u>60,277</u>
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Provisions	9	6,334	5,844
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>6,334</u>	<u>5,844</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES		<u>141,628</u>	<u>66,121</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>155,062</u>	<u>154,248</u>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Retained surplus		<u>155,062</u>	<u>154,248</u>

**Deafness Forum Limited**

ABN: 49 008 587 611

**Statement of Changes in Equity**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2015**

**2015**

	<b>Retained surplus</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Balance at the beginning of the financial year	154,248	154,248
Total comprehensive income	814	814
<b>Balance at the end of the financial year</b>	<b>155,062</b>	<b>155,062</b>

**2014**

	<b>Retained surplus</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Balance at the beginning of the financial year	148,080	148,080
Total comprehensive income	6,168	6,168
<b>Balance at the end of the financial year</b>	<b>154,248</b>	<b>154,248</b>

**Deafness Forum Limited**

ABN: 49 008 587 611

**Statement of Cash Flows**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2015**

	2015	2014
Note	\$	\$
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Receipts from customers, members and grants	395,867	386,808
Payments to suppliers and employees	(307,219)	(396,242)
Interest received	4,915	5,521
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	<u>93,563</u>	<u>(3,913)</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Payment for plant and equipment	-	(200)
Payment for held-to-maturity investments	-	(5,521)
Proceeds from held-to-maturity investments	70,086	-
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities	<u>70,086</u>	<u>(5,721)</u>
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents held	163,649	(9,634)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	44,118	53,752
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	<u>2</u> <u>207,767</u>	<u>44,118</u>

# **Deafness Forum Limited**

ABN: 49 008 587 611

## **Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2015**

The financial statements are for Deafness Forum Limited (the Company) as an individual entity, incorporated and domiciled in Australia. Deafness Forum Limited is a not-for-profit Company limited by guarantee.

### **1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies**

#### **Basis of Preparation**

The Company has elected to adopt the Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements (established by AASB 1053 Application of Tiers of Australian Accounting Standards, and AASB 2010-2 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from Reduced Disclosure Requirements).

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements that have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (Reduced Disclosure Requirements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board) and the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012.

A number of new or revised Australian Accounting Standards are effective for the first time in the current financial year. These standards have had no material impact on the entity.

Material accounting policies adopted in the preparation of these financial statements are presented below and have been consistently applied unless otherwise stated.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs modified, where applicable, by the measurement at fair value of selected non-current assets, financial assets and financial liabilities.

#### **Accounting Policies**

##### **(a) Going concern**

As described further in Note 13, there is uncertainty over future funding which will affect the extent of the services provided by the Company in future financial years. The directors have prepared the financial statements on a going concern basis as additional funding is still being sought to enable the Company to continue in some capacity in future financial years. If additional funding is not obtained by March 2016, the directors will consider whether to commence processes to wind up the Company. The assets and liabilities at 30 June 2015 are recorded at values that are consistent with fair value and no material differences exist between the measurement of assets and liabilities on a going concern basis or on a liquidation basis.

##### **(b) Income tax**

No provision for income tax has been raised as the Company is exempt from income tax under Div 50 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

##### **(c) Inventories**

Inventories are measured at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Costs are assigned on a specific identification basis and include direct costs and appropriate overheads, if any.

##### **(d) Plant and equipment**

Each class of plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Where a revaluation has been performed, any accumulated depreciation at the date of the revaluation is eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset and the net amount is restated to the revalued amount of the asset.

The carrying amount of plant and equipment is reviewed at the end of the reporting period to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount from these assets. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of the expected net cash flows that will be received from the assets' employment and subsequent disposal. The expected net cash flows have been discounted to their present values in determining recoverable amounts.

**Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2015**

**1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)**

**(d) Plant and equipment (continued)**

An asset's carrying amount is written down immediately to its recoverable amount if the asset's carrying amount is greater than its estimated recoverable amount.

Subsequent costs are included in the asset's carrying amount or recognised as a separate asset, as appropriate, only when it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the Company and the cost of the item can be measured reliably.

All other costs (e.g. repairs and maintenance) are charged to the statement of comprehensive income during the financial period in which they are incurred.

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with the carrying amount. These gains and losses are included in the profit or loss. When revalued assets are sold, amounts included in the revaluation reserve relating to that asset are transferred to retained earnings. Leasehold improvements and office equipment are carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation.

**Depreciation**

The depreciable amount of all plant and equipment, is depreciated on a straight-line basis from the date that management determine that the asset is available for use.

Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the shorter of the term of the lease and the assets useful life.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable asset are shown below:

<b>Fixed asset class</b>	<b>Depreciation rate</b>
Plant and equipment	20% - 40%

At the end of each annual reporting period, the depreciation method, useful life and residual value of each asset is reviewed. Any revisions are accounted for prospectively as a change in estimate.

When an asset is disposed of, the gain or loss is calculated by comparing proceeds received with its carrying amount and is taken to profit or loss.

**(e) Leases**

Leases of fixed assets where substantially all the risks and benefits incidental to the ownership of the asset, but not the legal ownership, are transferred to the Company are classified as finance leases.

Finance leases are capitalised by recording an asset and a liability at the lower of the amounts equal to the fair value of the leased property or the present value of the minimum lease payments, including any guaranteed residual values. Lease payments are allocated between the reduction of the lease liability and the lease interest expense for that period.

Leased assets are depreciated on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives where it is likely that the Company will obtain ownership of the asset or over the term of the lease.

Lease payments for operating leases, where substantially all the risks and benefits remain with the lessor, are charged as expenses in the periods in which they are incurred.

Lease incentives under operating leases are recognised as a liability and amortised on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease term.

**Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2015**

**1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)**

**(f) Financial instruments**

*Recognition*

Financial instruments are initially measured at cost on trade date, which includes transaction costs, when the related contractual rights or obligations exist. Subsequent to initial recognition these instruments are measured as set out below.

*Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss*

Financial assets are classified at 'fair value through profit or loss' when they are either held for trading for the purpose of short-term profit taking or if so designated by management. Such assets are subsequently measured at fair value with changes in carrying value being included in profit or loss.

*Loans and receivables*

Loans and receivables are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments and are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

Loans and receivables are included in current assets, except for those which are not expected to mature within 12 months after the end of the reporting period.

*Held-to-maturity investments*

Held-to-maturity investments are non-derivative financial assets that have fixed maturities and fixed or determinable payments, and it is the Company's intention to hold these investments to maturity. They are measured at amortised cost using the effective rate of interest.

Held-to-maturity investments are included in non-current assets, except for those which are expected to be realised within 12 months after the end of the reporting period, which will be classified as current assets.

*Available-for-sale financial assets*

Available-for-sale financial assets include any financial assets not included in the above categories. Available-for-sale financial assets are reflected at fair value. Unrealised gains and losses arising from changes in fair value are recognised in other comprehensive income and accumulated in the investment revaluation reserve.

*Financial liabilities*

Financial liabilities are recognised at amortised cost, comprising original debt less principal payments and amortisation.

*Fair value*

Fair value is determined based on current bid prices for all quoted investments. Valuation techniques are applied to determine the fair value for all unlisted securities, including recent arm's length transactions, reference to similar instruments and options pricing models.

*Impairment*

At the end of the reporting period, an assessment is made whether there is objective evidence that a financial instrument has been impaired. In the case of available-for-sale financial instruments, a prolonged decline in the value of the instrument is considered to determine whether an impairment has arisen. Impairment losses are recognised in the profit or loss.

**(g) Impairment of assets**

At the end of the reporting period, the carrying values of tangible and intangible assets are reviewed to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use, is compared to the asset's carrying value. Any excess of the asset's carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the profit or loss.

Where it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, the recoverable amount of the cash generating unit to which the asset belongs is estimated.

**Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2015**

**1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)**

**(h) Employee benefits**

Provision is made for the Company's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits that are expected to be settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled.

Employee benefits payable later than one year have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits. In calculating the present value of future cash flows in respect of long service leave, the probability of long service leave being taken is based upon historical data.

**(i) Provisions**

Provisions are recognised when the Company has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured.

**(j) Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents comprises cash on hand, deposits held at-call with banks and other short-term highly liquid investments which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

**(k) Revenue**

Revenue from the rendering of a service is recognised upon the delivery of the service to the customers.

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised upon the delivery of goods to customers.

Interest revenue is recognised on a proportional basis taking into account the interest rates applicable to the financial assets.

Grant revenue is recognised in the statement of comprehensive income when the entity obtains control of the grant, it is probable that the economic benefits gained from the grant will flow to the entity and the amount of the grant can be measured reliably.

If conditions are attached to the grant which must be satisfied before the entity is eligible to receive the contribution, the recognition of the grant as revenue is deferred until those conditions are satisfied.

When grant revenue is received whereby the entity incurs an obligation to deliver economic value directly back to the contributor, this is considered a reciprocal transaction and the grant revenue is recognised in the statement of financial position as a liability until the service has been delivered to the contributor, otherwise the grant is recognised as income on receipt.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

**(l) Goods and services tax (GST)**

Revenue, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the statement of financial position are shown inclusive of the GST.

Cash flows included in the statement of cash flows are included on a gross basis and the GST component of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which are recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority are classified as operating cash flows.

**Deafness Forum Limited**

ABN: 49 008 587 611

**Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2015****1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)****(m) Comparative amounts**

Comparative figures have been adjusted, where necessary to conform to changes in presentation for the current financial year.

**Critical accounting estimates and judgments**

The Directors evaluate estimates and judgments incorporated into the financial statements based on historical knowledge and best available current information. Estimates assume a reasonable expectation of future events and are based on current trends and economic data, obtained both externally and within the Company.

The Directors do not believe that there were any key estimates or key judgments used in the development of the financial statements that give rise to a significant risk of material adjustment in the future.

**2 Cash and cash equivalents**

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Cash at bank and on hand	<u>207,767</u>	<u>44,118</u>

**3 Trade and other receivables**

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Trade receivables	<u>810</u>	<u>-</u>

**4 Other financial assets**

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Held-to-maturity investments - term deposit	<u>82,265</u>	<u>152,351</u>

The term deposit has an initial maturity term of 3 months (2014: 6 months).

**5 Other assets**

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Prepayments	4,869	21,858
Accrued income	293	882
	<u>5,162</u>	<u>22,740</u>

**Deafness Forum Limited**

ABN: 49 008 587 611

**Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2015**

**6 Plant and equipment**

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Plant and equipment at cost	34,812	34,812
Less: accumulated depreciation	(34,126)	(33,652)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	686	1,160
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**Movements in carrying amounts of plant and equipment**

Movement in the carrying amounts for each class of plant and equipment between the beginning and the end of the current financial year:

	Plant and equipment	Total
	\$	\$
Balance at the beginning of year	1,160	1,160
Depreciation expense	(474)	(474)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	686	686
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**7 Trade and other payables**

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Trade payables	25,492	4,546
Accrued expenses	12,316	13,800
GST and PAYG (receivable)/payable	(891)	5,003
Super payable	367	-
Other payables	3,225	(116)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	40,509	23,233
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**8 Other liabilities**

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
ANHSC funds	78,255	15,590
Income in advance	11,000	2,800
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	89,255	18,390
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**Deafness Forum Limited**

ABN: 49 008 587 611

**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2015**

**9 Provisions**

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
<i>Current</i>		
Provision for annual leave	5,530	18,654
<i>Non-current</i>		
Provision for long service leave	<u>6,334</u>	<u>5,844</u>
	<u><u>11,864</u></u>	<u><u>24,498</u></u>

**10 Key management personnel disclosures**

Key management personnel is defined by AASB 124 "Related Party Disclosures" as those persons having the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the Company, directly or indirectly, including any director of the Company.

The totals of remuneration paid to the key management personnel of Deafness Forum Limited during the year are as follows:

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
<i>Total key management personnel compensation</i>		
	<u><u>124,686</u></u>	<u><u>120,175</u></u>

In addition to the above compensation, the Company has paid an insurance premium of \$756 (2014: \$2,470) for Associations Liability insurance which incorporates directors' and officers' liability insurance. It is not practical to obtain details of the component of the insurance premium that relates to key management personnel.

**11 Related party disclosures**

Other than the compensation of key management personnel, which is separately disclosed in these statements, there were no related party transactions during the financial year.

**12 Company limited by guarantee**

The liability of the members is limited.

In the event the Company is wound up, the Constitution states that each member is required to contribute a maximum of \$10 each towards any outstanding obligations of the Company.

**13 Economic dependence and going concern**

The major portion of Deafness Forum's funding came traditionally from the Australian Government, which had established the organisation to be the peak representative for its sector of the community. In late 2014, the Government announced it would discontinue funding to ten peak disability organisations, including Deafness Forum. Instead, it would fund a different model of national disability representation. Deafness Forum's funding will expire late in the 2015 calendar year. With a careful monitoring of operational costs and commitments, and accessing cash reserves when necessary, it is projected the organisation will continue to trade for the 2015-16 financial year. A financial risk management strategy was put in place in February 2015. The organisation's financial status will be closely monitored on a monthly basis by the board's Audit and Finance Committee. The organisation continues to negotiate with the Government on sourcing funding for the following financial year and beyond.

**Deafness Forum Limited**

ABN: 49 008 587 611

**Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2015****14 Financial Risk Management**

The Company's financial instruments consist mainly of deposits with banks, accounts receivable and payable.

The accounting policies and terms and conditions of each class of financial asset, financial liability and equity instrument at the balance date are consistent with those regularly adopted by businesses in Australia.

The Company is not exposed to any significant liquidity, credit or interest rate risk in relation to its financial instruments.

The totals for each category of financial instruments, measured in accordance with AASB 139 as detailed in the accounting policies to these financial statements, are as follows:

		2015	2014
	Note	\$	\$
<b>Financial Assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	2	207,767	44,118
Loans and receivables	3	810	-
Held-to-maturity investments	4	<u>82,265</u>	<u>152,351</u>
<b>Total financial assets</b>		<b><u>290,842</u></b>	<b><u>196,469</u></b>
<b>Financial Liabilities</b>			
<i>Financial liabilities at amortised cost:</i>			
- Trade and other payables	7	<u>41,400</u>	<u>18,230</u>
<b>Total financial liabilities</b>		<b><u>41,400</u></b>	<b><u>18,230</u></b>

**Net fair values**

Financial assets and financial liabilities are carried at their net fair value at the end of the reporting period. The carrying value of financial assets and financial liabilities approximates their net fair value due to their short term maturity or market interest rate. No financial assets or financial liabilities are traded on organised markets in standardised form.

**15 Contingent liabilities and contingent assets**

The Company has no contingent liabilities or contingent assets at the end of the financial year.

**16 Events after the reporting date**

The financial statements were authorised for issue by the directors on the date of signing the attached Directors' Declaration. The directors have the power to amend the financial statements after they are issued.

There are no events after the reporting period which require amendment of, or further disclosure in, the financial statements.

**17 Company details**

The registered office and principal place of business of the company is:

Deafness Forum Limited  
218 Northbourne Avenue  
BRADDON ACT 2612

**Deafness Forum Limited**

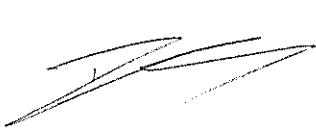
ABN: 49 008 587 611

**Directors' Declaration**

The directors of the Company declare that:

1. The financial statements and notes, as set out on pages 10 to 21, are in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012;
  - (a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards (Reduced Disclosure Requirements) and other mandatory professional reporting requirements; and
  - (b) give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30 June 2015 and of the performance for the year ended on that date of the Company.
2. In the directors' opinion, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.



Director .....



Director .....

Dated: 23 November 2015

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT  
TO THE MEMBERS OF  
DEAFNESS FORUM LIMITED**

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Deafness Forum Limited (the Company), which comprise the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2015, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the directors' declaration.

**Directors' Responsibility for the Financial Statements**

The directors of the Company are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012, and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

**Auditor's Responsibility**

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the directors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

### **Auditor's Opinion**

In our opinion:

- a) the financial statements of Deafness Forum Limited are in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012, including:
  - (i) giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2015 and of its performance for the year ended on that date; and
  - (ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Regulation 2013;
- b) we have been given all information, explanation and assistance necessary for the conduct of the audit;
- c) the registered entity has kept financial records sufficient to enable a financial report to be prepared and audited; and
- d) the registered entity has kept other records as required by the Act.

### **Inherent Uncertainty Regarding Continuation as a Going Concern**

Without qualification to the opinion expressed above, attention is drawn to the following matter:

The financial statements have been prepared on the basis that the Company is a going concern. As disclosed in Notes 1 and 13 to the financial statements, the Company's ability to continue as a going concern is dependent on the sourcing of funding for the following financial year and beyond. If the Company is unable to continue as a going concern it may not be able to realise its assets and extinguish its liabilities in the normal course of business and at the amounts stated in the financial statements.

  
**Duesburys Nexia**  
Canberra, 23 November 2015

  
**G J Murphy**  
Partner