

ANNUAL REPORT 2024 - 2025



Gippsland Disability Advocacy recognises, acknowledges and respects all community members. Gippsland Disability Advocacy acknowledges and respects the culture and values of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples past and present.

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Minutes - Annual General Meeting

21st October 2024

Meeting started at 4.30pm

Face to Face at GDA Office, Suite 2 first floor, 6 – 8 Grey Street, Traralgon
and Via Microsoft Teams

1.	The Board chair opened the meeting and shared an Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to all.
2.	Members Present: Rosalie O’Neil, Joanne Wilson, Clare McHugh, Lianne Ypelaan, Katherine Scott, Hunter Hadley, Coran Johnson, Melati Conwell, Kath Cook, Vanessa Taylor
3.	Apologies: Kristal Newman, Jean Murphy, Yvonne Waite, Sally Glass, Caitlin Coombes, Andrea Barnes, Justine White
4.	In attendance: Leanne Wishart – Executive Officer, Sharon Bergles, Tania Ryan, Samantha Knowles, Vi Seear. Staff Apology: Samantha Gamlin
5.	Minutes from 2023 Gippsland Disability Advocacy AGM dated 16th October 2023 Moved: Joanne Wilson Seconded: Rosalie O’Neil
6.	2024 Chairperson / President’s Report: The report was taken as read.
7.	Treasurer’s Report: The Treasurer’s report was taken as read.
8.	Appointment of Auditor for 2024 -25 for Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was proposed that Tyrell Partners be reappointed as GDA auditor. Moved: Clare McHugh Seconded: Rosalie O’Neil
9.	Executive Officers Report: The Executive Officers Report was taken as read.

10.	<p>Election of Board of Management.</p> <p>Two Board positions were up for re-election. A Board Nomination for Rosalie O’Neil was received and was duly elected to the Board for a further two years.</p> <p>Election of Executive Positions.</p> <p>The following Executive Position appointments were nominated and accepted by those present at the AGM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chairperson - Rosalie O’Neil <i>The Board and members reviewed and approved the recommendation.</i> ● Vice President / Deputy Chair – Lianne Ypelaan The Board and members reviewed and approved the recommendation. Lianne to complete a nomination form. ● Public Officer / Secretary - Clare McHugh The Board and members reviewed and approved the recommendation. ● Treasurer - Joanne Wilson The Board and members reviewed and approved the recommendation. ● General Board members – Coran Johnson, Katherine Scott.
11.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2025 AGM date to be confirmed.
12.	Meeting Close: 5:15pm

Agenda - Annual General Meeting

20th October 2025

Meeting starts at 4.30pm

Face to Face at GDA Office, Suite 2 first floor, 6 – 8 Grey Street, Traralgon
and Via Microsoft Teams

1.	Meeting Opened including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to all.	Rosalie O’Neil – Board Chair
2.	Members Present: Board Chair- Rosalie O’Neil, Joanne Wilson Treasurer,	Leanne Wishart - EO
3.	Apologies: Yvonne Waite,	Leanne Wishart
4.	In attendance: Leanne Wishart – Executive Officer,	Leanne Wishart
5.	Minutes from 2024 Gippsland Disability Advocacy AGM dated 21st October 2024	Rosalie O’Neil Moved: Seconded:
6.	2025 Chairperson / President’s Report	Rosalie O’Neil
7.	Treasurer’s 2025 Report	Joanne Wilson
8.	Appointment of Auditor for 2025 -26 for Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc.	Joanne Wilson Moved: Seconded:
9.	Executive Officers 2025 Report	Leanne Wishart
11.	Presentation: Strengthening Disability Advocacy Conference 2025 /Trends	Sharon Bergles – Senior Advocate

11.	<p>Election of Board of Management then: Election of Executive Positions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chairperson/President • Vice President / Deputy Chair • Public Officer / Secretary • Treasurer • General Board members 	Leanne Wishart
12.	Any Other Business	Board Chair
13.	Meeting Close	Board Chair



Our Mission Statement

To empower, advocate and promote social justice and equitable access for people living with disability.

Our Vision Statement

An accessible, inclusive community that values the rights and contributions of all people especially people living with disability to be free and empowered to exercise their rights.

Our Values

1. **Human Rights**

We advocate for the fundamental rights of people living with disability. We strive to promote their dignity and equity in all aspects of our work.

2. **Empowerment**

We provide information and knowledge, build confidence and capacity, connect with community, share leadership, appreciate achievements, and support each other.

3. **Respect for All**

We strive to create a welcoming and inclusive environment. We believe that everyone deserves to be treated with respect, patience, and kindness. We are non-judgemental, and welcome diverse perspectives.

4. **Independent**

We operate without bias. We respect each client's freedom to choose service providers that best meet their needs.

5. **Learning**

We engage in continuous learning and self-improvement. We embrace the dignity of risk and accept that everyone has the right to fail and learn from their mistakes.



GDA Board Chair Report 2025

I am pleased to present the GDA Board Chair Report for 2025. In October 2023 I commenced as Board Chair and this has been another year of change and adaptation. Thank you to our Board

members and committed staff members who have been innovative in another year of uncertainty and change.

Our Board Members are Lianne Ypelaan – Deputy Chair, Joanne Wilson – Treasurer, Clare McHugh – Secretary/Public Officer, Katherine Scott, Tanya Campigli, Ginni Vincent and Ron D’Arcy. Coran Johnson, sort leave of absence and was unable to rejoin the Board.

The Board meets on the third Monday of the month, from 6.30 - 8.30pm. The flexibility provided by a combination of in person at the Traralgon office, and online attendance ensures that Board members from across Gippsland can join and lend their expertise at each meeting.

Throughout 2024 – 2025 the Board have reviewed policies and procedures that ensure GDA remains compliant with Disability Service Standards. GDA underwent a midterm audit in March 2025 and successfully completed all small changes required in the agreed timeframe. Congratulations to Board and staff.

Thank you to GDA's Finance/HR Officer Rupi Sandhu who provides timely finance reports to Treasurer Joanne Wilson and attends relevant Board Meetings to ensure Board members have good insight into GDAs financial position.

Thank you to everyone who has attended a Board meeting in the last 12 months. Justice Connect provided us with Not for Profit Board training on Monday 20 January 2025. This was informative and provided Board members with a comprehensive understanding of the roles for the Board and responsibilities. and As the Board Chair I attend relevant training webinars when possible. At Board meetings we discuss the internal and external environments. We evaluate the Risk register regularly and address and anticipate any risks for GDA. We have a solid Strategic plan, Mission and Vision statements. We keep up to date with the changing government departments, acronyms and relevant legislation.

This year hasn't been uncomplicated in things such as missing out on funding due to definition of rural, regional or remote. All staff members work part time and we are very fortunate to have their professionalism, expertise and loyalty. Their knowledge and work practises are an asset to our organisation and the community we serve.

I would like to thank our Executive Officer, Leanne Wishart. Leading GDA in an ever changing landscape requires flexibility and resilience. Leanne has demonstrated this with great tenacity.

Sincerely,

Rosalie O'Neil

Board Chair

Treasurer's Report 2025

Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc.

Dear Members,

It is my pleasure to present the Treasurer's Report for Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc. (GDAI) for the financial year ended 30 June 2025.

For the year, GDAI recorded a total turnover of \$949,953.91, which represents a decrease of \$292,810.37 compared to the previous year's turnover of \$1,242,764.28 (2023–2024). This reduction is primarily attributed to the conclusion of the Information Linkages & Capacity Building (ILC) project, which officially ended on 30 June 2024. Our income for the year was made up of recurrent funding from the Department of Social Services (DSS) and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH), which continue to support our core service delivery.

Despite this reduction in revenue, our balance sheet remains strong and indicates a healthy surplus, with sufficient cash at bank to support operations and project commitments into the 2025–26 financial year.

While our profit and loss statement shows a loss for the year, it's important to clarify that this is due to the accounting treatment of unspent funds, which are carried forward as provisions for future projects rather than being recognised as profit. This ensures that funds are appropriately allocated to their intended purposes in the following financial year.

Our annual audit, conducted by Tyrrell Partners, confirms that the financial statements provide a true and fair view of the organisation's financial position and performance. The accounts have been prepared in full compliance with all applicable accounting standards and regulatory requirements.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the team at GDAI for their dedication throughout the 2024–25 year. I would like to acknowledge our Finance Officer, Rupi Sandhu, for her oversight of our financial operations, ensuring compliance, budget control, and transparent reporting. I also extend thanks to Leanne Wishart for her ongoing efforts in maintaining strong expenditure controls across the organisation.

Gippsland Disability Advocacy remains in a sound financial position and continues to deliver significant impact for our stakeholders, despite the challenges faced throughout the year. This outcome is a testament to the hard work and commitment of the Board, management, and staff, whose collective efforts have ensured the organisation's ongoing strength and resilience.

In closing, it is both an honour and a privilege to serve as the Treasurer of GDAI, an organisation that continues to play a vital role in advocating for the rights and needs of people with disabilities across Gippsland.

Yours sincerely,



Joanne Wilson
Treasurer
Gippsland Disability Advocacy



Executive Officer's Report 2025

It is a pleasure to provide the Executive Officers Report for 2025.

This year has been one of challenges and change as NDIS participants learn of and come to terms with the changes to the NDIS, the disability and community sectors work with participants, people with disability and their families and carers to ensure choice and control are central in people's lives. At this time and as we look ahead Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc – GDA – role as independent disability advocates is as important as it ever has been.

The Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc Staff Team remains a strong and cohesive group that is committed and continues to excel in meeting the mission, vision and organisational values of GDA.

The Team Statement is living, breathing and a constant in the approach to our work. It demonstrates the experience and values that each team member brings and contributes to GDA every day.

'We are a professional and diverse Team whose passion and respect for each other unites us to work collectively to achieve social justice and equity. We are committed to providing dedicated advocacy services that are compassionate, trustworthy, inclusive and non-judgemental. We create a safe environment and empower people with disability to achieve their full potential.'

The current GDA Team are:

Brianna Matthews – Melba Advocacy Officer, Disability Advocate & Cancer Council Victoria Project Officer - Wonthaggi Office.

Chiara Bordonaro provides Administrative Assistance and support to the Team.

Lauren Robertson – Intake and Advocacy Officer, Wonthaggi Office.

Rupi Sandhu - delivers our essential Finance and Human Resources.

Sam Gamlin provides Disability and Systemic Advocacy.

Sharon Bergles works with clients on NDIS Appeals and Disability Advocacy and Melba Advocacy.

Stephen Grainger - works with clients on NDIS Appeals.

Tania Ryan, Disability Advocate, based at the Wonthaggi Office.

Vi Seear - is our most experienced Disability Advocate.

***Sam Knowles** – Disability Advocate – worked with GDA from August 2024 to 18 July 2025.

NB# Thank you to Senior Advocate Sharon Bergles who stepped into the Acting Executive Officer role while I took leave in 2025.

Our achievements for 2024 – 2025 have been many. Please find some of these in the Services, Projects & Activities Update following this report.

Following the release of the Disability Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability – DRC – Final Report and the Recommendations the disability advocacy sector anticipated that in line with recommendations increased resources could be available to meet the need and unmet need for independent disability advocacy. GDA looks forward to a timely response to these recommendations as the demand for independent disability advocacy rises exponentially in Gippsland;

Key recommendations for disability advocacy: i) Increased funding: Commit additional funding to the National Disability Advocacy Program. ii) Strengthened NDIS support: iii) Ensure NDIS participants who are at higher risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation have funding for support coordination in their plans. iv) Amend NDIS rules to clarify that providers of support coordination cannot also provide other funded supports to the same participant, which ensures independence. v) Develop a program to connect NDIS participants with appropriate disability advocacy organizations. vi) Improved data and reporting: Collect and publish annual data on advocacy services, including demographic indicators like geographic location and First Nations status. vii) Support for NDIS negotiations: Provide capacity-building and advocacy support for individuals negotiating their NDIS plans. viii) Independence: Ensure advocacy is independent and conflict-free, with a stronger emphasis on protecting the rights of people with disability; ix) Enhanced quality and safeguarding: Amend the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework to include advocacy as a key component for addressing and reducing violence, abuse, and neglect.

Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc. – GDA values its networks and partnerships and continues to grow these relationships across the Gippsland region.

Relationships and collaboration across a number of stakeholders and networks are vital. As members of Victorian Rural Advocacy Network - VicRAN, Disability Advocacy Network Australia – DANA, VDAN – Victorian Disability Advocacy Network, NDS – National Disability Services, Victorian Disability Advocacy Resource Unit – DARU, Victorian Council of Social Services - VCOSS - and Gippsland community services networks to ensure opportunities for professional collaboration and the benefits of networking for positive individual and community outcomes.

GDA's profile and reputation is strong across Gippsland and the disability and community services sector. Media across Gippsland frequently seek and respect the comment from GDA regarding issues that affect the lives of people with disability, families and carers.

I wish to thank the GDA Board for their unwavering support throughout 2024 – 2025. Their skills, expertise and professionalism have been invaluable to me and the organisation. Thank you.

We look forward to the year ahead, 2025 – 2026. The sector is in constant change and GDA is ready to work flexibly, adaptably and innovatively to meet the challenges that change brings.

I am honoured to work for Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc. alongside a highly dedicated, skilled and committed Team and equally committed and experienced volunteer Board.

Leanne Wishart

Executive Officer

Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc.

Services, Projects & Activities Update

Administrative Review Tribunal – NDIS Appeals

NDIS changes have delivered a raft of concerns and challenges for participants. These changes took effect as of October 3, 2024. One significant change is that Participants can now only use their funds for things listed as NDIS supports. This has resulted in a series of changes in pricing, claiming, and plan management, which can lead to reduced funding for participants. Key changes include shifting therapy funding from the Core budget to Capacity Building, reducing travel subsidies for allied health professionals, and introducing quarterly funding periods for better budget management. These changes are aimed at addressing rising costs but are causing significant concerns among participants and providers, particularly regarding service viability, especially for those in regional areas or with complex needs.



Participant's Plans are being drastically reduced, not even equating to what they had received in their previous 12 month period. Items and supports previously provided are no longer available.

As a result, Participants are in need of day to day supports and have been pressured into reaching beyond the internal review process to the external review process i.e. Administrative Reviews Tribunal [ART]. This can be a long emotional journey for most who choose this process, including having access additional evidence around their disability and need for supports.

As you can imagine the request for ART advocacy support has sky rocketed. During the last 12 month period our 2 advocates have supported 47 people through this process, helping them to live better lives.

The ART process is long. Sadly though the need for ART service demand has outweighed the availability to help all the requests coming through. With that in mind GDA has developed a response where an advocate will speak directly to an individual to dispel some of the anxiety of what to anticipate through this journey and developed a kit of support/ handy hints to help them.

Sharon Bergles – ART & Senior Advocate

Wonthaggi Office AGM report

This year has been another busy and successful year for the Wonthaggi office team of Lauren, Bri and Tania. The Wonthaggi office, co-located with Bass Coast Adult Learning, is a busy place with additional programs running alongside the delivery of individual advocacy across Bass Coast and South Gippsland local government areas.

Our/GDA's intake officer (Lauren) receives the referrals from clients / service providers / co-workers and others and then follows up with each to ensure all relevant information is gathered and shared with the advocacy team at the weekly intake meetings.

During this year GDA was successful in gaining a grant with Cancer Council to deliver an awareness program to people living with disability, on the importance of bowel and cervical screening. Bri enthusiastically led this Gippsland wide project, recruiting peer leaders to co-develop resources and facilitate information sessions. This project reached 4001 people. Bri and Peer Leader Tim had the opportunity to present the project at a Webinar hosted by the Cancer Council, which reached over 100 people attending both nationally and internationally.

Individual advocacy services continue to be delivered from the Wonthaggi office, by Tania and Bri. Having the office base in Wonthaggi allows clients to meet on site if they wish, utilising the office or garden space for a private meeting. This base also allows advocates to meet with clients at a location closer to them within the South Gippsland, Bass Coast local government areas. Requests for advocacy support continue to include NDIS and Disability Support Pension applications, both with systems difficult to navigate. Advocacy issues also included discrimination within school settings, supported decision making support, housing, Workcover matters, guardianship applications, financial abuse, navigating complex family situations among many others. Advocates continue to find clients in complex situations with mental and physical health concerns along with the impacts of disability affecting their wellbeing. Advocates have completed training in trauma informed practice and the impacts of vicarious trauma in response to the complex nature of this work.

We continue to be involved in our local community activities and build strong partnerships with local service providers. GDA has representation on the Bass Coast and South Gippsland Access and Inclusion committees and is a member of the Baw Baw Services network. Additionally, a strong working relationship continues with the Wonthaggi WHO (We Help Ourselves) group and New Wave self-advocacy group, with GDA participating in community advocacy events

through the year, including International Day of Persons with Disability and local Disability Expo.



Disability Services Commission's Rebecca joined Tania of Gippsland Disability Advocacy and Tim of New Wave Gippsland Self Advocacy at Mitchell House. C04_5124



Gippsland Disability Advocacy's Lauren was deep in conversation with PICAL Centre Manager David Rooks about the work they do. C06_5124

Photos above appeared in the Sentinel Times 17/12/24



Bri Matthews presenting in front of an audience of 6 women with disabilities, on the topic of Cervical Screening at Yooralla Women's group on 26th March 2025

Individual & Systemic Advocacy

Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc. – GDA – provides both Individual and Systemic advocacy funded by the National Disability Advocacy Program - NDAP and the Victorian Disability Advocacy Program - VDAP.



Individual advocacy includes working with and supporting people to exercise their rights by providing assistance to: voice concerns, access information, resolve issues or to identify available support options.

Systemic advocacy focuses on making a more inclusive community through changes to legislation, policies and practices that ensure the collective rights and interests of people with disability are served.

GDA also provides many instances of capacity building through email and telephone advice, information and resources and referrals to appropriate services.

Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc. Executive Officer:

- Latrobe Regional Health Diversity and Inclusion Committee.
- Governance for East Gippsland Partnership for Wellbeing of Children and Young People
- Chair of Children With Additional Needs Working Group.
- East Gippsland Emergency Recovery Committee
- Net Zero Transition Consultation with EO via online meeting 02/04 – Discussed issues for people with a disability within Latrobe Valley.
- Wellington Shire Access & Inclusion Plan face to face consultation -

Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc. Advocates are engaged in the following networks:

- South Coast Wellbeing Network
- Latrobe City Community Disability Access and Inclusion Group
- Bass Coast Access & Inclusion Advisory Committee
- South Gippsland Access and Inclusion committee
- Baw Baw Community Services Network
- Latrobe Community Services Network
- Latrobe Regional Health/Hospital – Diversity and Inclusion Committee

GDA provided a submission to the Youth Mental Health Models of Care Survey and request for submissions – and also contributed to the VicRAN Victorian Rural Advocacy Network – submission. Input to submission provided by three staff members and EO.

Preventing Homelessness in East Gippsland – EO attended –To work together with partners and allies to build stronger, inclusive communities across Gippsland. Three workshops held facilitated by Louanne Mooney EGSC, Tiana Felmingham and Student Deakin University using a systems thinking approach.

Everyone in East Gippsland should have suitable housing. We know that homelessness is a complex problem and impacted by many factors. Join us to unpack the issues that cause homelessness in East Gippsland and work towards local action to change the story.

Third and final workshop Tuesday 17th June 2025. The causal loop diagram (CLD) aka systems map that was developed as part of workshops 1 and 2, along with a summary of action ideas will be circulated after the final workshop.

Wellington Disability Action Plan stakeholder consultation meeting – Tuesday 17th June 2025

DANA National Regional, Rural and Remote members Network – meeting held Discussion of current issues. First meeting in a months' time, then every 3 months ongoing. Exciting network opportunity.

Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc.:

- is a part of the National Centre for Disability Health and Wellbeing Working Group.
- Led the Victorian Rural Advocacy (Disability) Network (VicRAN) submission to the Inquiry into the NDIS participant experience in rural, regional and remote Australia.
- Provided feedback and contributed to DANA, DARU and VCOSS submissions reviews into the NDIS Legislation review.

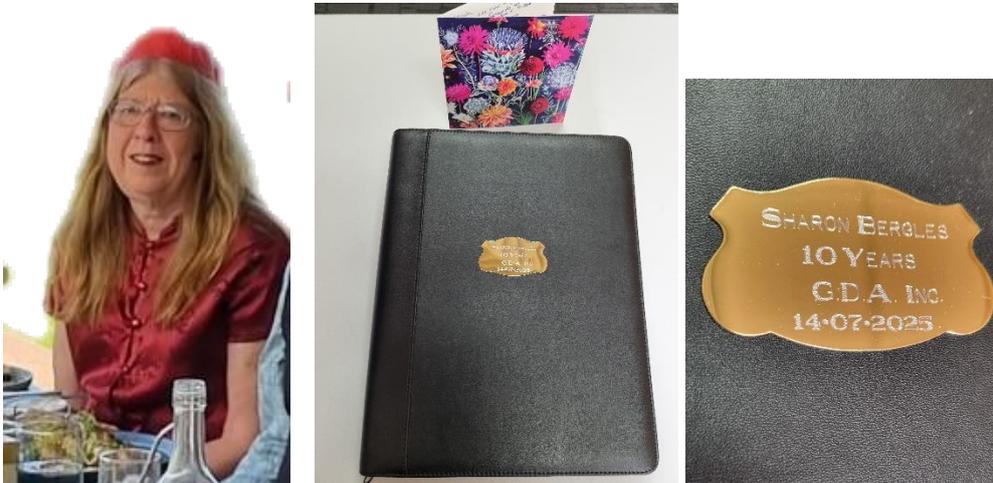
GDA's Systemic Advocate Sam Gamlin is very active in many systemic issues including but limited to:

- Disability Resource Centre (DRC) – Continued partnership with DRC and many other advocacy agencies throughout Victoria regarding transport (part of the Transport for All Coalition). Bringing a rural and regional voice the meetings are held monthly or more regularly, if possible, via teams and liaise via phone/email. Some of the systemic issues/topics discussed: Accessible tram/train stops throughout Victoria, Speaking with clients/public prior to last year's state election re campaigning MP's and candidates to ensure that they honour commitments to inclusivity and deliver access to all re the public transport system.
- Latrobe City Council - Meetings with the Community Engagement Officer (Community Access and Inclusion) regarding and contributing to such items as the Council Disability Access and Inclusion Plan, the development Bindi Maps for blind people and people who have low vision, accessible parking, Tactile Ground Surface Indicators, broad council facility and community accessibility issues raised by GDA clients and community members. Pedestrian crossing for access for all across major roadways.
- Vline (Victorian regional train service) – Phone calls/emails with Vline regarding issues that GDA clients have faced accessing their assigned seats, challenging behaviours from the public towards people living with a disability using the train services and the lack of assistance/education from conductors/staff.
- NDIS Ministers Office – regarding systemic issues around client's NDIS plans and the need for widespread change.
- Bindi Maps Head Office – Ongoing discussions with Bindi Maps re the need to have these installed in the CBD and other areas of Latrobe City (Gippsland). Discussions also with Latrobe City Council.
- Independent Third Persons Program group – Numerous GDA staff working on this issue. Individuals of the group discussing with different police stations, re their policies/procedures.
- Residential Accommodations – Concerns over safety for residents.
- Prisons and hospitals – Legal issues regarding the rights for inmates/patients with a disability.
- Guide Dogs Victoria – Issues with matching dogs with individuals/wait times.

- Traralgon Taxis – Discussions regarding issues for clients who are vision impaired. i.e. Overcharging, wait times, access.
- GROW program - meetings with the GROW program re employment.

Celebrations:

Congratulations Sharon Bergles 10 Years of dedicated service to GDA – July 2025



Sharon joined GDA in July 2015. Sharon provides a professional approach to disability advocacy that comes from her many years of experience across the many areas of service provision for and with people with disability including but not limited to day services, residential services, children’s respite and holiday programs in outer metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria. Sharon’s 37 years of experience has seen a holistic based approach to speaking out and protecting the rights of people with disability. Sharon’s sound understanding of the NDIS and the NDIS Appeals process is valued by colleagues and participants alike. And the expertise provided to Melba clients through the specialist advocacy provided is invaluable. Sharon has provided a secretarial role to VicRAN during this period seeing a variety of change and leadership within the collaborative organisation.

Last year we celebrated Vaifoa (Vi) Seear – 14 years of dedicated service with Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc.

Vi has been working in the disability advocacy and citizen advocacy sectors for more than 20 years. GDA is grateful for the expertise and knowledge Vi brings to our Team and shares so generously. Thank you Vaifoa



Centre Against Sexual Assault - GCASA Partnership – GDA is proud to be a partner in the Peer Relationship Education Partners – PRE- EmpowerED project funded by an ILC Grant his project will deliver a project about respectful relationships, consent and safety for people with cognitive disability. The partnership includes New Wave Gippsland, Gippsland Disability Advocacy and the Federation University Collaborative Evaluation Research Centre.

Cancer Council Victoria - CCV Grant/Project - GDA received a grant of \$30,000 from Cancer Council Victoria to Increasing cancer screening for people with disabilities. Bri Matthews, Project Coordinator, with the support of peer leaders Tim and Sarah, delivered appropriately developed information to people with disability in Gippsland regarding bowel and cervical cancer screening via face-to-face information sessions and providing information to services and community settings across Gippsland. The project finished with a final project presentation to other project recipients and CCV in September 2025.

Congratulations Bri, Tim and Sarah this project was a success because of your interest and involvement.



East Gippsland Children with Additional Needs Working Group – GDA is a member of CWANWG and will continue participation as agreed to Chair the CWANWG in 2025 and has also proved minute taking responsibilities. As part of the CWANWG, GDA participates in the East Gippsland Children's Expo's.



International Day of People with Disability 2024

The Wonthaggi Team - partnered with New Wave and GippSport had around 70 attend. They were well catered for with BBQ by Rotary. People come from a range of services with minibuses coming from Phillip Island to Leongatha, new Councillor appointed to A&I committee, Rep from Disability Services Commissioner, 2 neighbourhood house representatives, Service finder worker, PHN and quite a few community members.

- GDA Inc supported the Wonthaggi WHO Group, BBQ Guide Park Wonthaggi 4th Dec. GDAI organised \$100 gift voucher to support the self-advocacy group.



Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc partnered in International Day of People with Disability with Gippsland Art Gallery – Art Workshop and Exhibition – partnered with the Art Gallery Educator and active community advocate Chloe Bethune who has lived experience.

It was Chloe's elevator pitch at the Next Big Idea forum that evolved the Making the Invisible Visible IDPWD Art Exhibition 3rd December 2024 to 30 February 2024 Gippsland Art Gallery, Sale. This exhibition was the follow up to an Art workshop of the same name. A Community Grant was sort from Wellington Shire Council to turn art works into postcards. Exhibition Opening – Well attended by 70% of the artists, support workers and community members and family.

ABC Gippsland's took photos and recorded some audio/interviews which played on the ABC Gippsland

See ABC Facebook page on the evening of 3rd December 2024 - <https://www.facebook.com/ABCGippsland/>

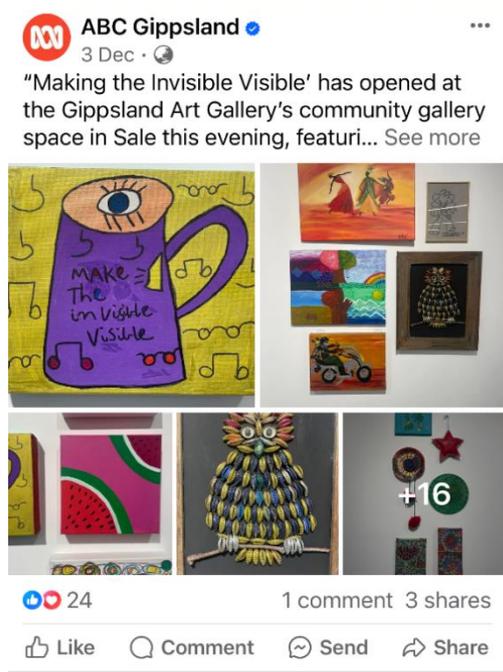
Also, ABC Gippsland Breakfast Show Friday 6th December 2024.. The link to this is below with the Exhibition Opening at the 2:06:50 mark of the recording:

Bec Symons ABC Gippsland Breakfast -

<https://www.abc.net.au/listen/programs/gippsland-breakfast/breakfast/104681480>



Photo above is artist Amanda Duck with her featured artwork/postcard and some other amazing art works exhibited.



Publicity and Promotion

GDA’s Facebook presence continues to grow. Staff attended Gippsland TAFE’s Orientation Days in Bairnsdale, Sale and Morwell. GDA advocates and Project Workers regularly attend group meetings including Peer Support groups to discuss rights and the role of self and independent disability advocacy. GDA attended the New Wave Expo, the Baringa School Student Expo and the Latrobe Valley Community Services Network’s Expo at Mid Valley, Morwell.

Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc Facebook page is a key mechanism for delivering information to people with disability and stakeholders as well as raising community awareness on disability issues.

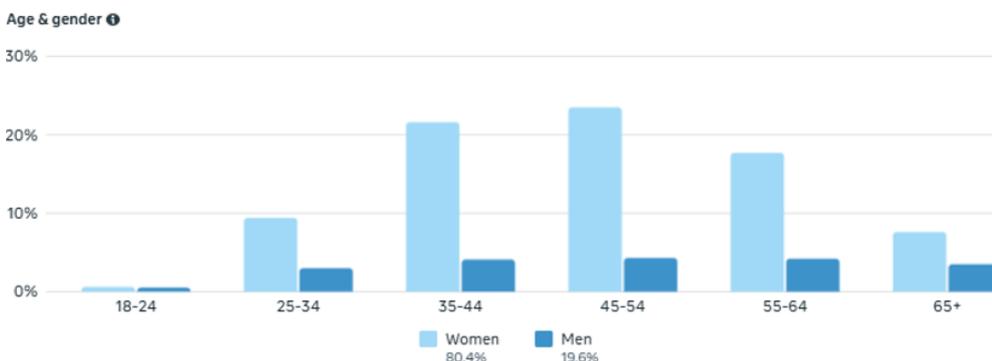
Our Facebook posts have the following statistics for 2024 – 2025:

Reach: 11.3K up 39.9%

Content Interaction: 964 up 133.4%

Followers: 1,348

Statistics Age & Gender



Victorian Rural Advocacy Network - VicRAN – GDA is an active member of VicRAN. Our Senior Advocate Sharon Bergles provides the secretarial role and has done so for the past eight years. In 2024 the Executive Officer/GDA led the VicRAN consultation/submission to the ‘NDIS experience of rural and remote participants. This involved writing the consultant brief, employing a consultant, supporting the work of the consultant, and liaising with VicRAN members over a three month period. GDA and VicRAN would like to thank the Karleen Plunkett, a person with lived experience, for bringing this submission to life and submitting it to the portal.

Melba Support Services – Contracted Independent Advocacy

Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc – GDA – was proud to working in a contractual arrangement to provide independent advocacy to their residential clients across the 14 separate group homes across the Gippsland region. This agreement has made access to advocacy provision more accessible with residents being able to use GDA and Melba offices if they wish to engage with more privacy and separation from their home environment.

Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc

ABN 58 327 674 067

Special Purpose Financial Report

For the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

Tyrrell Partners Pty Ltd

ABN 86086407776

Suite 2, First Floor Moe Vic 3825

Telephone: (03) 56223201

www.tyrrellpartners.com.au



Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc
ABN 58 327 674 067

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Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc
ABN 58 327 674 067

Committee's Report

Your committee members submit the financial report of Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc (the association) for the financial year ended 30 June 2025 .

Committee Members

The names of committee members throughout the year and at the date of this report are :

Rosalie O'Neil (Chairperson)	Lianne Ypelaan (Deputy Chairperson)
Clare McHugh (Secretary)	Joanne Wilson (Treasurer)
Coran Johnson	Katherine Scott
Ginny Vincent	Tanya Campigli
Ron D'Arcy	

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the association during the financial year were:

To provide outreach support to people with disabilities across the six local government areas in Gippsland.

Significant Changes

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

Operating Result

The operating loss for the association for the period amounted to \$(13,547.26). (2024 operating loss \$(3,356.02)).

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the members of the committee.

Joar

Date: 29 September 2025



Rosalie O'Neil

Date: 2 October 2025

Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc
ABN 58 327 674 067

Statement of Profit or Loss

For the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
Income			
Grants & Donations		44,596.00	1,418.01
Funding Income		248,546.74	318.16
Memberships		14.00	27.91
Government Funding		638,874.94	1,221,252.61
Interest Received		17,922.23	19,747.59
Total Income		949,953.91	1,242,764.28
Expenses			
Administration Expenses		3,030.00	-
Advertising		891.27	2,186.14
Auditor's Remuneration		15,242.50	21,288.01
Client Support		-	1,514.61
Computer Expenses		11,674.93	16,846.16
Community Events		1,502.89	7,210.96
Consultancy Fees		1,961.00	7,765.00
Depreciation		5,820.15	7,120.77
Electricity		3,838.30	5,395.39
Employee Expenses		569.30	16,180.57
Equipment		362.73	2,375.69
Fringe Benefits Tax		205.81	752.47
Insurance - Workcover		13,649.61	21,765.07
Insurance		1,509.09	1,418.18
Legal Costs		2,180.00	2,543.64
Motor Vehicle Expenses		29,684.27	40,696.59
Office Expenses (Cater, Clean, Consum)		2,372.99	5,356.57
Postage		292.87	269.26
Printing & Stationery		6,717.31	7,437.75
Provision for Annual Leave		7,991.86	9,638.07
Provision for Long Service Leave		(1,042.86)	679.51
Rates & Taxes		3,788.71	4,921.93
Rent & Body Corp Fees		44,822.52	44,488.44
Repairs & Maintenance		-	3,485.09
Staff Training & Welfare		4,865.00	4,713.81
Subscriptions		16,460.92	6,250.93
Superannuation Contributions		77,705.94	99,857.98

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

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	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
Telephone		10,224.22	13,622.12
Travelling Expenses		821.28	1,552.17
Wages		696,358.56	888,787.42
Total Expenses		963,501.17	1,246,120.30
Loss		(13,547.26)	(3,356.02)

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

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Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc
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Appropriation Statement

For the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

	2025	2024
Note	\$	\$
Loss available for Appropriation	(13,547.26)	(3,356.02)
Opening Balance at the Beginning of the Period	78,900.06	82,256.08
Total Available for Appropriation	65,352.80	78,900.06
Retained Association Funds at the End of the Period	65,352.80	78,900.06

Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc
ABN 58 327 674 067

Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
Assets			
Current Assets			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	2	319,240.12	541,116.99
Trade and Other Receivables	3	14,655.01	12,247.21
Total Current Assets		333,895.13	553,364.20
Non Current Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment	4	12,465.03	14,035.18
Total Non Current Assets		12,465.03	14,035.18
Total Assets		346,360.16	567,399.38
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Trade and Other Payables	5	24,776.71	38,196.91
Provisions	6	256,230.65	450,302.41
Total Current Liabilities		281,007.36	488,499.32
Total Liabilities		281,007.36	488,499.32
Net Assets		65,352.80	78,900.06
Equity			
Retained Association Funds	7	65,352.80	78,900.06
Total Equity		65,352.80	78,900.06

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

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Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc
ABN 58 327 674 067

Statement of Changes in Equity

As at 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
Retained Association Funds			
Opening Balance		78,900.06	82,256.08
Comprehensive Income			
Loss		(13,547.26)	(3,356.02)
Total Comprehensive Income		(13,547.26)	(3,356.02)
Total Retained Association Funds		65,352.80	78,900.06

Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc
ABN 58 327 674 067

Statement of Cash Flows

For the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
Operating Activities			
Cash Receipts from Customers		713,173.12	970,387.35
Cash Paid to Suppliers and Employees		(948,722.22)	(1,234,589.32)
Cash Generated From Operations	2	(235,549.10)	(264,201.97)
Net Cash from Operating Activities		(235,549.10)	(264,201.97)
Investing Activities			
Interest Received		17,922.23	19,747.59
Purchase of Property, Plant and Equipment		(4,250.00)	-
Net Cash (used in)/from Investing Activities		13,672.23	19,747.59
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents		(221,876.87)	(244,454.38)
Cash and Cash Equivalents at the Beginning of the Period		541,116.99	785,571.37
Cash and Cash Equivalents at the End of the Period	2	319,240.12	541,116.99

Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc
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Notes to the Financial Statements

For the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

Note 1: Summary of Material Accounting Policies

Financial Reporting Framework

The financial statements are special purpose financial statements prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirement of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012. The association is a not-for-profit entity. The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity as the users of the financial statements are able to obtain additional information to meet their needs.

Statement of Compliance

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and the basis of recognition and measurement specified by all Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations.

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and are based on historical costs. They do not take into account changing money values or, except where stated specifically current valuations of non-current assets.

The following material accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless stated otherwise, have been adopted in the preparation of these financial statements.

Accounting Policies

a. Income Tax

The association is exempt from the assessment of income tax under Subdivision 50-B of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997, therefore no provision for income tax has been made and tax effect accounting has not been adopted.

b. Plant and Equipment

Plant and equipment is carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation.

The depreciable amount of plant and equipment is depreciated on a straight-line basis over the asset's useful life to the association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

c. Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within short-term borrowings in current liabilities on the Statement of Financial Position.

d. Employee Provisions

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

e. Revenue and Other Income

The association is first required to determine whether amounts received are accounted for as Revenue per AASB 15: Revenue from Contracts with Customers or Income per AASB 1058: Income of Not-for-Profit Entities.

Funding arrangements which are enforceable and contain sufficiently specific performance obligations are recognised as revenue under AASB 15. Otherwise, such arrangements are accounted for under AASB 1058, where upon initial recognition of an asset, the association is required to consider whether any other financial statement elements should be recognised, with any difference being recognised immediately in profit or loss as income.

Operating grants, donations, government funding and membership

When the association receives operating grant revenue, donations, government funding and membership income, it assess whether the contract is enforceable and has sufficiently specific performance obligations in accordance with AASB 15.

When both these conditions are satisfied, the association:

- Identifies each performance obligation relating to the grant;
- recognises a contract liability for its obligations under the agreement;
- recognises revenue as it satisfies its performance obligations.

Where the contract is not enforceable or does not have sufficiently specific performance obligations, the association:

- recognises the asset received in accordance with the recognition requirements of other applicable accounting standards;
- recognises related amounts (being lease liability, financial instruments, provisions); and
- recognises income immediately in profit or loss as the difference between the initial carrying amount of the asset and the related amount.

Interest Income

Interest income is recognised using the effective interest method.

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

Note 2 Cash and Cash Equivalents

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
Petty Cash - GDAI	88.01	66.55
Bank Australia Everyday	29,392.25	61,466.85
Bank Australia Community Access	17,039.62	16,320.81
Bank Australia Gift Account	21,224.73	138,407.46
Bank Australia Term Deposit	250,000.00	322,164.74
Bank Australia - Debit Card	1,354.26	2,527.46
Australia Post - B Mathews	141.25	163.12
	319,240.12	541,116.99

Reconciliation of Cash

For the purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand and in banks, net of outstanding bank overdrafts. Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period as shown in the statement of cash flows can be reconciled to the related items in the statement of financial position as follows:

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
Cash and Bank Balances		319,240.12	541,116.99
		319,240.12	541,116.99

Reconciliation of Net Profit after Tax to Net Cash Flows from Operations

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
Operating Loss		(13,547.26)	(3,356.02)
Adjustments for:			
Depreciation		5,820.15	7,120.77
Movement in provision		6,949.00	10,317.58
Investment activities		(17,922.23)	(19,747.59)
Movement in working capital:			
Movement in trade and other receivables		(2,407.80)	(9,057.49)
Movement in trade and other payables		(13,420.20)	6,811.49
Movement in future projects		(201,020.76)	(256,290.71)
		(235,549.10)	(264,201.97)

Note 3 Trade and Other Receivables

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
Trade Debtors		11,299.92	9,190.12
Other Debtor - ATO		2,953.00	-
BAS Amendment		402.09	3,057.09
Total Trade and Other Receivables		14,655.01	12,247.21

Note 4 Property, Plant and Equipment

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
Plant & Equipment		63,374.76	61,124.76
Less: Accumulated Depreciation		(50,909.73)	(47,089.58)
Total Property, Plant and Equipment		12,465.03	14,035.18

Note 5 Trade and Other Payables

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
Trade Creditors		7,742.34	6,987.65
Other Creditors - ATO		-	12,765.42
Payroll Liabilities			
PAYG Withholding		6,475.98	7,273.98
Superannuation Payable		6,161.14	6,533.46
Salary Sacrifice Liability		1,998.36	1,527.39
Portable Long Service Leave		2,398.89	3,109.01
Total Payroll Liabilities		17,034.37	18,443.84
Total Trade and Other Payables		24,776.71	38,196.91

Note 6 Provisions

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
Provision for Future Projects			
Future Projects		157,812.31	358,833.07
Total Provision for Future Projects		157,812.31	358,833.07
Employee Benefits			
Provision for Annual Leave		86,983.89	78,992.03
Provision for Long Service Leave		11,434.45	12,477.31
Total Employee Benefits		98,418.34	91,469.34
Total Provisions		256,230.65	450,302.41

Note 7 Retained Association Funds

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
Opening Balance			
Retained Profits - Beginning of Year		78,900.06	82,256.08
Total Opening Balance		78,900.06	82,256.08
Current Year Earnings			
Current Earnings		(13,547.26)	(3,356.02)
Total Current Year Earnings		(13,547.26)	(3,356.02)
Total Retained Association Funds		65,352.80	78,900.06

Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc
ABN 58 327 674 067

True and Fair Certification by Members of the Committee

ANNUAL STATEMENTS GIVE TRUE AND FAIR VIEW OF FINANCIAL POSITION AND PERFORMANCE OF INCORPORATED ASSOCIATION

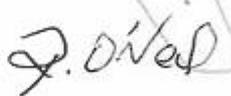
The statements attached to this certificate give a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc during and at the end of the financial year of the association ending on 30 June 2025

Board Member

Date: 29/09/2025



Joanne Wilson - Treasurer



Rosalie O'Neil
Board Chair

Board Member

Date: 02/10/2025

Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc
ABN 58 327 674 067

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Member of Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Gippsland Disability Advocacy Inc (the association), which comprises the statement in financial position as at 30 June 2025, the profit or loss statement, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the certification by members of the committee.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report gives a true and fair view of Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012, the financial position of the association as at 30 June 2025 and of its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements and the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the association in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 : Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

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

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist the association to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of the Committee for the Financial Report

The committee is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and for such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the committee is responsible for assessing the association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the committee either intends to liquidate the association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit 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 association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the committee.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the committee regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Tyrrell Partners Pty Ltd - Moe
Suite 2, First Floor Cnr George & Moore Streets,
Moe, 3825, Vic


Neil Tyrrell, CPA

Date: 6 October 2025

