



**Australian  
Lions Hearing Dogs**



**2019  
ANNUAL  
REPORT**

# 2109 ANNUAL REPORT



**Australian  
Lions Hearing Dogs**

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# SUPPORTERS



Mt Barker & Bridgewater



MT. BARKER  
PET CARE CENTRE

## PATRON

### *His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le AC Governor of South Australia*



I am honoured to be Patron of the Australian Lions Hearing Dogs.

For over 35 years, the Australian Lions Hearing Dogs have served Australians with hearing impairments with distinction.

We're very proud that the National Training Centre is located here in South Australia, at Verdun in the Adelaide Hills, and that Hearing Dogs are provided free of charge.

Each Hearing Dog costs over \$37,000 to train and I thank Lions Clubs from across Australia for their outstanding support, as well as the continued generosity of the Australian public.

I congratulate the Australian Lions Hearing Dogs on another successful year and wish the organisation all the best for the future.

*His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le AC  
Governor of South Australia*

# BOARD AND GOVERNANCE

## **PATRON**

His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le AC  
Governor of South Australia

## **BOARD**

PDG Rhys Roberts OAM  
**Chair**

PDG Graham Smithers  
**Treasurer**

PDG Frank Gratton  
**Secretary**

Lion Margie Thomas  
**C Districts Coordinator**

Lion John Chate  
**N Districts Coordinator**

Lion Andy Fitzgerald  
**Q Districts Coordinator**

Lion Geoff Clow  
**T District Coordinator**

Lion Maureen Capizzi  
**V Districts Coordinator**

Lion Robert Halford  
**W Districts Coordinator**

## **DISTRICT**

### **C Districts**

Lion Margie Thomas (C2)  
Lion Vanessa Malycha (C1)

### **N Districts**

Lion John Chate (N5)  
Lion Mark Scott (N1)  
Lion Tracey Anderson (N2)  
Lion Gladys Mitchell (N3)  
PDG Robert Smith (N4)

### **Q Districts**

Lion Christine Forrest (Q1)  
Lion Paul Clay (Q2)  
Lion Wendy Robson (Q3)  
Lion Juanita Goodland (Q4)

### **T Districts**

Lion Geoff Clow (T1)

### **V Districts**

Lion Nick Martinelli (V1-4)  
Lion Maria Baade (V2)  
Lion Peter Harrison OAM (V3)  
Lion Glenys Needham (V5)  
Lion Robyn Harrison (V6)

### **W Districts**

Lion Robert Halford (W2)  
Lion Joy Sinclair (W1)

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

2019 was another successful year for the Australian Lions Hearing Dogs (ALHD) with the placement in October of our 600th dog, one of a record number of 23 dogs delivered free of charge during the year – a dog every fortnight.

Demands for our services have substantially increased with the number of applications up 15% on the previous year and our waiting time to receive a dog approaching two years.

This growth has been achieved, despite our full and overstretched facilities at the National Training Centre at Verdun in the Adelaide Hills, by greater efficiencies through the expansion of our Volunteer Program and our Puppy Fostering Program. The staff and the Project's training programs and procedures are regarded both nationally and internationally as world's best practice in the Assistance Dogs industry.

One in six Australians suffer from hearing loss with substantial deterioration with age to one in three if you are over 50 and one in two for over 60s.

From the hard of hearing person who takes their aid off at night to the profoundly deaf person where no aids help, many Australians live at risk when they can't hear sounds such as the knock at the door, a telephone or, life-threateningly, a smoke alarm or a crying baby.

By the common KPIs of fixed capital, money, people and product, ALHD remains strong –

- Fixed capital - The buildings at the Training Centre are in good if aging condition.
- Finances - Solid – but only because of the continued generous support of Australia's Lions Clubs from Rockhampton to Perth and Darwin to Hobart.
- People - Staff are dedicated experts whose training programs are second to none.
- Product – We deliver a furry friend who is a companion and a lifesaver, every fortnight free of charge that changes the lives of deaf and hard of hearing recipients and their families across Australia.

Our Student Grant Program is targeted to deaf and hard of hearing Australians under the age of 25. The Grant is to be used for tuition, equipment, accommodation or travel to help applicants break down the barriers of being deaf or hard of hearing and create opportunities that may not have been possible without ALHD's help.

The Volunteer Program sees enthusiastic volunteers having the opportunity to work with staff and the trainee dogs at the Training Centre, giving valued experience and references to those wanting to break into the industry, whilst increasing the mental and physical stimulation of our dogs in training.

And our Puppy Raising Program, through which puppies are purchased by ALHD and then fostered and socialised by local members of the community, will in 2020 provide more than half of our Hearing Dog Graduates.

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Australian Lions Hearing Dogs Program, which will be 40 years old in 2020, is a victim of its own success. Our Training Centre is at capacity – indeed, it is overstretched, hence our ambitious growth program as detailed later in this Annual Report to double our output of trained Hearing Dogs to one a week over the next five years, with the capacity to re-double that to two a week.

To assist in this development and to advise the Board more generally on its future directions and growth, the Board has appointed a Development Advisory Committee under the distinguished leadership of Lions Past International President Barry Palmer AO.

The outlook for the Australian Lions Hearing Dogs Project is exciting, and your Board and the close knit staff are looking forward to further growing its potential in our 40th anniversary year of 2020.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Rhys Roberts', with a horizontal line underneath.

**PDG Rhys Roberts OAM**  
*Chairman*

# CEO REPORT

2019 marked a year of continued growth for Australian Lions Hearing Dogs (ALHD) as it heads towards its 40th anniversary in 2020.

Undoubtably the highlight of the year was the announcement of the first major expansion in the history of ALHD to the Lions Multiple District Convention held at Geelong in May. The \$9.3million expansion is the culmination of several years of hard work behind the scenes, mapping the trajectory of the organisation over the next 20 years.

The expansion will give ALHD the capacity to delivery over 100 dogs per annum at peak production, enabling the organisation to assist more Deaf and hard of hearing Australians than ever. Purposely staged to minimise impact on the current delivery schedule, increases in areas for support, training and kennels will give a state-of-the-art Centre for our world class program.

With our current facilities now having reached capacity, the development of our puppy program and efforts in improving efficiency are resulting in a greater number of placements than the organisation has ever delivered in its history. Even with hitting these goals, our wait list continues to increase, giving even more urgency to our need to expand our National Training Centre.

The cornerstone of the success of Australian Lions Hearing Dogs is, as it has been throughout our 40 years, the support of Lions Clubs across Australia. Not only do Lions Clubs provide a substantial portion of the operating funds for the program but have a hands-on support role with each Hearing Assistance Dog delivered to a person in need. This service aspect of our program is unique to ALHD and is envied by our peer organisation internationally.

Throughout the year, we welcomed new members to the Australian Lions Hearing Dog family, with an amazing group of volunteers giving up their precious time for the cause. With this we enlisted new staff members in both our training and development teams. The success of our Cadet program over the last couple of years has ensured a skilled, enthusiastic and dedicated Training Team is in place to see the organisation into the future.

In a show of commitment from staff and supporters, the Charter of the Lions Club of Australian Hearing Dogs took place in March. The Club came together with a purpose to raise funds to support ALHD recipients in times of financial hardship and emergency, whilst also promoting the program nationally.

Last, but not least, I must thank our amazing ongoing and new sponsors whose support of Australian Lions Hearing Dogs has been critical to our success. Along with long time sponsors Jarrett Motors, Reid Print and Adelaide Vet we welcomed the support of Mount Barker Pet Care Centre and Blackhawk, who together feed all dogs and puppies in our program, free-of-charge.

Through our 40th anniversary celebrations in 2020 we will be unveiling many new future plans and initiatives, stay tuned.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D Horne', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

**David Horne**  
*Chief Executive Officer*

# DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

In 2018, the Board and Management of Australian Lions Hearing Dogs (ALHD) recognized that in order to future proof the organization and enable increased outputs of Hearing Assistance Dogs to meet the growing demand for them, the current National Training Facility would need to be upgraded to something much larger and fit for purpose. Strategy and design firm Hub & Spoke was engaged to produce a Masterplan, including block plans for a new facility on the current site and obtain cost estimates. Quantity Surveyor firm Rider Levett Bucknall provided a detailed concept cost estimate of AU\$9,350,000.

In January 2018, Tass Schmidt was appointed to the role of Development Director. She was charged with the responsibility of establishing a fundraising function within ALHD. This included creating a Capital Campaign to raise the funds required to build the new National Training Centre whilst developing other fundraising channels to increase revenues to cover operational costs as the organisation grows. Prior to this time there had been no formalized fund raising activity within ALHD other than an annual appeal to Australia's Lions Clubs.

During this 12 month period, the two key types of fundraising thrusts have commenced, one was setting up for a Philanthropic Campaign and the second was preparation and structuring of a general fundraising function within the organisation. General fundraising will continue to grow and evolve beyond the Philanthropic Campaign. Potential donor subsets were recognized for each of the campaign types, a strategy for each was determined and prioritized.

The first priority was to initiate ALHD's Capital Campaign. Xponential Pty Ltd, an Australian firm, expert in philanthropic fundraising was engaged initially to conduct a Campaign Readiness Assessment to establish community appetite, and likely Federal Government support for ALHD's capital raising ambitions. The survey confirmed the positive likelihood of ALHD being able to raise the required funds for the project. Since September 2019, with the continued support of Xponential, preparations have been underway for launch of the Capital Campaign in 2020. This included, production of an ALHD Prospectus, completion of a Business Case, completion of a Case for Support, preparation of a Campaign Brochure, production of a Campaign Video, identification of potential donors and Campaign Leaders through QLD, NSW, Victoria and South Australia, commencement of an enlistment program for a Campaign Taskforce of Campaign Chairperson, Patrons, Advocates and Ambassadors. The initial Engagement Event, to be hosted by newly appointed Advocate, Rachel Lawrie was scheduled to take place in Adelaide on January 30th, 2020.

In addition the first draft of a grant submission requesting AU\$2mill funding toward the new building was completed and submitted to the Lions Clubs International Foundation on 30th December.

The primary targets for the Capital Fund Raising Campaign are:

- High net worth individuals, philanthropists and strong influencers in this domain.
- Lions Clubs International Foundation
- Aligned Corporate organisations for Sponsorships
- Foundations
- Government (Federal and State)

# DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Despite the Capital Campaign not having officially launched, towards the end of 2019, two sizable contributions to the Campaign were confirmed. One a single donation from a private trust which contributed AU\$500,000, another a Corporate Sponsorship of AU\$500,000 to be paid over 5 years commencing 2020.

Preparations were commenced for the establishment of general and ongoing Development Department within ALHD. As an initial brand awareness building exercise directed at Australian Lions members a newly designed and produced ALHD gifting brochure was inserted in the November Australian Lions Magazine.

To build a new general fundraising function it was identified that the following was required:

- Commission and populate a CRM system
- Build a donor and relationships data base of existing connections and newly targeted prospects
- Develop a donor pipeline and stewardship program
- Develop communications and a communications plan
- Develop a campaign plan
- Build engagement with Lions Clubs
- Build engagement with Lions members
- Developing a Gifts in Wills program
- Through promotions, social media, networking, presentations to industry and special interest groups build general public engagement and donations and capture data

It was confirmed that additional resources and support would be required to enact these initiatives. In December 2019, a Fundraising Manager, Alix Katala was recruited to commence in January 2020.

Preparations were also commenced for the development of an upgraded more donor centric ALHD website, this will be completed in the first months of 2020.

2019 has seen the development of a multi-layer and highly motivated fundraising function within ALHD which will take the organisation sustainably into the future.

Towards the end of 2019, the Adelaide Hills region near the site of ALHD's National Training Centre was harrowed by bushfire, the horror and shock of this followed on through January as the destruction by Australia's bushfires became more widely spread. The decision was taken to postpone Fundraising Engagement Events till a later time, whilst maintaining the robust momentum of development and enlistment for both the Capital Campaign and ALHD's general fundraising function.



**Tass Schmidt**  
*Development Director*

# PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Our Training Program has had a very busy year, completing 23 deliveries spanning across every state and the ACT as well as conducting over sixty public access tests (PATs) and sound assessments on accredited dogs nationwide. Additionally, our Training Team represented the organisation at four Disability Expos, promoting Australian Lions Hearing Dogs and Lions.

Due to strategic planning, a focus on improving efficiency and the introduction of our puppy program two years ago, early projections indicate an increase in deliveries during the 2020 calendar year, estimated to eclipse 30 placements.

The number of applications we receive for Hearing Assistance Dogs increase each week to the point that our waiting list is close to two years. Demand on our training and support staff is at an all-time high, our kennels are consistently full or overflowing into the quarantine kennels on a regular basis. To combat these issues, we have employed another Cadet Trainer to our team. To complete their Cadetship must meet certain criteria which includes successful completion of Certificate 3 in Dog Training and Behaviour through the National Dog Training Federation (NDTF), Auslan (Australian Sign Language) course and delivered a dog they have trained by themselves. We have successfully had three trainers complete a Cadetship with us and continue to contribute to our organisation. Though successful, the Cadetship is a long-term solution as it can take up to 18 months to complete.

As Members of Assistance Dogs International we are required to conduct a Public Access Test (PAT) on every one of our delivered dogs working Australia wide, of which we have 110 dogs. Not only does the PAT involve the dog's public behaviour, we also test them on their sound work within the home, so we know that the dogs work is being kept to high level.

The success of our Puppy Program has been behind the increase in supply of dogs for the training program, which for the first time in my career has seen kennels at capacity. Puppies make up 1/3 of all recruits with the rest being sourced from pounds, shelters and rescue organisations. Development of our Puppy Program continues as we look at different breeds, establish a training and socialisation curriculum as well as recruit and train puppy foster carers.

Reviews of our training and support programs have seen improvements in our efficiency as well as development of the use of technology in our follow up training. Both Recipients and supporting Lions Clubs have benefited from an increase in the use of videoconferencing which allows the Training Team to be more engaged post-delivery. This has shown promising results with an improvement in sound work of dogs placed in homes.

Research of peer organisations during the last couple of years have shown that Australian Lions Hearing Dogs holds its own in terms of quality of product and support. We intend to keep this standard high and consistently review our processes and techniques.



**Darren Coldwell**  
*Program Director*

# EXPANSION

Australian Lions Hearing Dogs proudly announced its first major expansion of its National Training Centre at the 2019 MD Convention in Geelong.

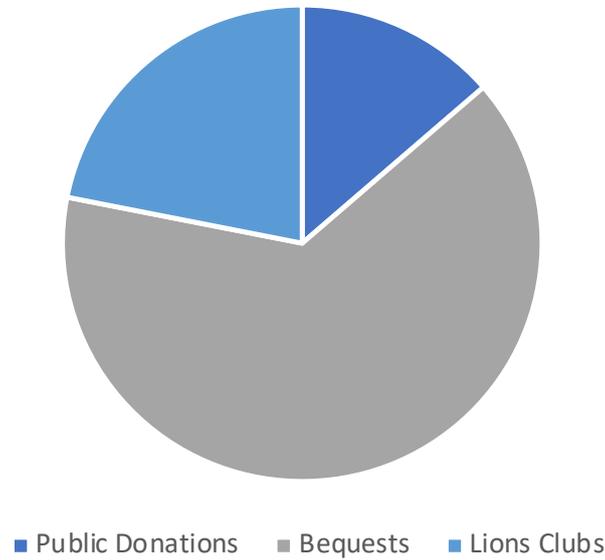
The Master Plan produced by Hub & Spoke is purposely staged to allow ALHD to continue to provide Hearing Dogs at current rates to deaf and hard of hearing Australians.

Features of the expansion include two purpose built training houses, a new state-of-the-art kennel complex with a 50 dog capacity, 200 person capacity multipurpose demonstration hall, enlargement and renovation of current administration building.

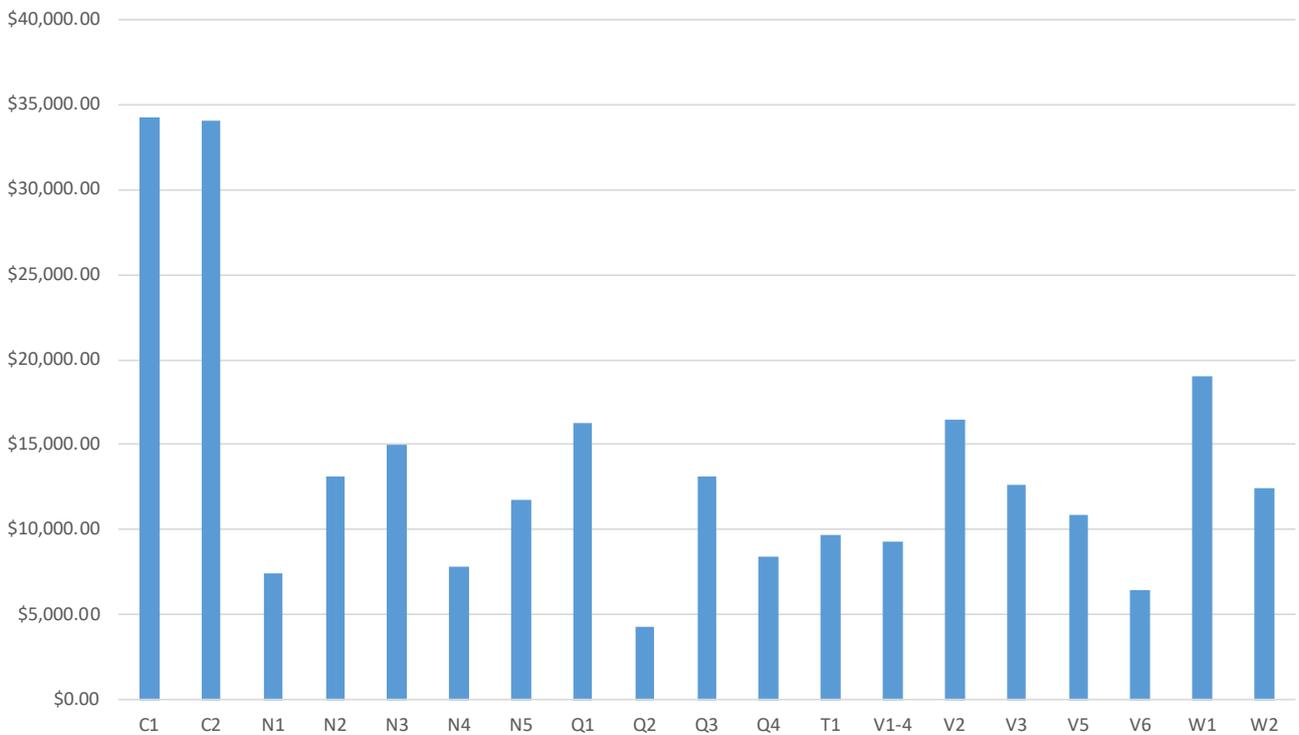


# DONATIONS AND LIONS SUPPORT

## Donation Sources (2019)



## District Donations 2019



# FINANCIAL REPORT

	2019	2018
<b>Operating Income</b>		
Donations - Lions Clubs	\$ 274,097.00	\$ 294,755.00
Donations - General Public	\$ 170,631.00	\$ 113,156.00
Doantions - Bequests	\$ 806,795.00	\$ 207,762.00
Donations - Capital Campaign	\$ 503,000.00	\$ NIL
Government Subsidies	\$ 19,314.00	\$ 80,618.00
Merchandise Sales	\$ 13,009.00	\$ 17,187.00
Other	\$ 71,313.00	\$ 66,077.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 1,858,159.00</b>	<b>\$ 779,555.00</b>

## Operating Expenses

Staff Expenses	\$ 745,614.00	\$ 560,572.00
Other Operating Expenses	\$ 556,459.00	\$ 343,740.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 1,302,073.00</b>	<b>\$ 904,312.00</b>

Operating Surplus/Deficit	\$ 556,086.00	-\$ 124,757.00
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## Investment Portfolio

Increase in Invesment Portfolio Value	\$ 407,089.00	\$ -
Income from Investment Portfolio	\$ 193,211.00	\$ 167,374.00
<b>Total Investment Income</b>	<b>\$ 600,300.00</b>	<b>\$ 167,347.00</b>



# **Australian Lions Hearing Dogs**

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