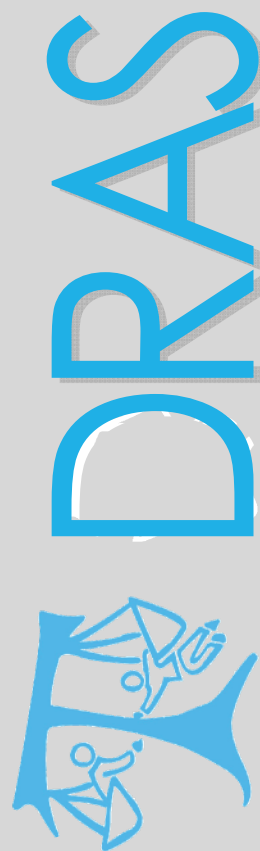


22nd ANNUAL REPORT

2007 - 2008



DISABILITY RIGHTS & ADVOCACY SERVICE INC

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chairperson's Report	2 - 3
Advocate's Report	3 - 5
Form Assist Report	6
Board of Management Profiles	7
Board of Management Profiles Retired	8
Staff Profiles	9 -10
Acknowledgments	10
Statement of Cash Flow	11
Balance Sheet	12
Profit & Loss	13
Independent Audit Report	14

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

What a tumultuous year! DRAS has experienced! The Federal Governments review of Advocacy Services presented many challenges as we reviewed our service delivery and began planning for what the future of DRAS might be. We engaged a consultancy firm who worked with us to confirm that as a stand alone agency we continued to be active in delivering a vital service to individuals in this region who may experience a disability. We were also able to identify and address gaps for individuals and plan for changes to systems and process that would improve access and understanding for all members of our community.

We also through Cathy's leadership and commitment have strengthened our relationships with "like" services which we believe will provide our community with a service delivery partnership which is more responsive and effective.

With a change of Federal Government in late 2007 we were reassured that our funding would continue and our future looked brighter. We received confirmation from the Federal Government they would work with all Advocacy Services to identify and improve access and equity within a quality framework of service delivery. This will mean as a Board we will be working towards maintaining our current agency standards and further developing our current processes.

Cathy Bolger continues to successfully lead the Advocacy Service from our Myers Street office. Paula Hobley completed her time with us and has since moved on to a role with the local Aged Care Assessment Service. Alanna Poynton recently accepted a position with GMHBA. Both Paula and Alanna were a great asset for DRAS and their contribution was valued by not only the Board but the people they worked with. We have been fortunate to secure Kay Goldsworthy's services in admin. Kay has been working at DRAS backfilling for Alanna while she was involved with the Form Assist project.

We had a number of Board changes losing significant people who have made such wonderful contribution to the DRAS board. Meg Parsons left the Board early in 2008 and her skill in the area of Quality Assurance has been difficult to replace. Amanda Bavin and Nerida Mulvey both left the Board after changes to their employment and moves to Melbourne. We are actively recruiting to the Board and look forward to our future association with individuals new to the Board.

We were successful in receiving funding from the Geelong Community Foundation which allowed us to successfully coordinate and provide the Form Assist project supporting many individuals in this region who have been unable to complete a variety of forms for a number of reasons. This service was offered 2 afternoons a week from a central area of Geelong and readily established a unique role in Geelong. While our project time has ceased we are pleased that the service will continue to be offered by The Salvation Army at the Northside Centre. We have also received a grant from United Way which will provide an opportunity for us to work with BDRC, CORAS and DHS to develop and implement a collaborative advocacy project, "Taking the Lead".

DRAS has a bright future, with renewed energy, new and constructive relationships with other services and a continuing ongoing commitment to ensure that individuals in the Geelong region continue to be heard and have access to the services that best meet their needs, we are certainly looking forward to the next year.

Robyn Van Ingen

SENIOR ADVOCATE'S REPORT

This year has been one of growth, consolidation and change. Growth in the expansion of DRAS' service provision via the Form assist program; consolidation in relation to the positioning of DRAS within the disability advocacy sector in the Barwon region; and change flowing from the Rudd Government's National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) review process. In 2007/08 DRAS advocates have listened to and advocated on behalf of people in the Geelong community who have a disability, their families and carers. DRAS is committed to providing advocacy support and referral in relation to individual need and broader systemic issues.

Growth in the number of people requiring advocacy is reflected by over 300 new and existing clients receiving advocacy assistance, information or referral from DRAS during the reporting period. This figure includes people who required representation by DRAS advocates, advocacy telephone contacts to professionals working with new and existing clients and information and referral inquiries only.

DRAS' reporting statistics verify the demand for appropriate, local disability advocacy service provision in this region. To this end DRAS has been active in advocating to the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) to improve funding for advocacy in the Geelong region. This remains a key challenge for DRAS in the year ahead as we work towards implementing the objectives and principles of the NDAP.

The level of need clients present with often requires immediate support and individual intervention via advocacy. Advocates assist clients who have been marginalisation from other service providers with advocacy and appointment support. DRAS aims to foster constructive, cooperative, client focused relationships and referral processes within the advocacy network, and particularly with disability and generic service providers, to further enhance the rights and options of people with a disability. Issues that have been of priority for this reporting period include: homelessness, financial management and debt issues, maintaining client's rights in relation to child protection and child access issues, primary health and personal safety issues, access to education and employment issues and legal issues.

Advocacy encompasses listening to and speaking and/or acting on behalf of an individual's needs, through to broader universal actions which occur via systemic advocacy interventions. Addressing systemic issues via collaborative working relationships with other service providers, government departments and the community ensures that the views of people with a disability are represented and influence decision making and social policy.

The Form assist project launched in August 2007 has been successful in providing timely and dignified access to services for people in regard to the reading and completion of official documents and correspondence. The Form assist project has enabled DRAS to promote advocacy via a systemic approach and in addition highlights the importance of building community networks. And once again DRAS has been a key participant in the Having a Say Conference held in Geelong in February 2008. In conjunction with the

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) DRAS co facilitated a workshop on the steps to self advocacy at the conference.

Looking ahead DRAS has formed a partnership with Barwon Disability Resource Council, Colac Otway Region Advocacy Service and the Department of Human Services to develop, implement and manage a community advocacy initiative that will raise the awareness and profile the achievements of people with disability in the Barwon region. This is an exciting venture that will unfold in the year ahead.

In closing, I express my thanks to the Board of Management and to the Board members who retired from this community position during the 2007/08 year. In particular I note the Board's time and expertise in managing the changes and challenges of the NDAP review and look to their guidance for the year ahead. I thank DRAS' experienced staff and volunteers for their ongoing commitment and competence which continues to inspire positive results.

Cathy Bolger
Senior Advocate

DRAS would like to take this opportunity to greatly acknowledge the significant financial support provided by:

**Department of Families,
Housing, Community Services
and Indigenous Affairs
(FaHCSIA)**



United Way
Geelong
Community Fund



As a part of DRAS' commitment to systemic advocacy in the Geelong region, the Form-assist service began operation in August 2007. The service assisted many individuals in the Geelong community who had difficulty completing forms and we received a great deal of positive feedback from our clients.

Unfortunately, due to non-recurrent funding the service closed in August 2008. However, we are hopeful that a similar service will be continued by another community service provider, to carry on providing this worthwhile service to the community.

DRAS would like to sincerely thank the following organisations for their generous support of Form-assist throughout its operation:



BOARD OF MANAGEMENT PROFILES



Robyn Van Ingen - Chairperson

Robyn is Chief Social Worker at Barwon Health. Prior to taking up her current position Robyn was Team Leader at Community Options St Laurence Community Services. Robyn has worked extensively with people who have a disability and in a case management context advocated for them. She also has experience in aged care, youth and family areas. Robyn was on the Committee of Management of the Geelong Community Legal Service 1995–1997.

Dr Jane Maidment



Dr. Jane Maidment is a social work educator at Deakin University. Prior to lecturing at Deakin she lived in New Zealand and practiced as a social worker in mental health for ten years. Jane has an active research interest in cross cultural practice and diversity and has facilitated strategic planning initiatives within a range of community based organisations.

Ross Brown



Ross is a senior lawyer with Harwood Andrews Geelong practising as a specialist family lawyer and in disability laws including appearances at the Guardianship and Administration Board and Mental Health Review Board. Ross has been involved in several community organisations over the past 20 years including a number of community legal centres and the Richmond Fellowship of Victoria. He is presently also a committee member and volunteer for the Barwon Community Legal Service.

Tim Noonan



Tim is a Director of West Carr & Harvey, a leading Geelong accounting and business advisory firm. He is a Chartered Accountant and has a Bachelor of Commerce. Tim has approximately 10 years experience in the accounting and business advisory field, working largely with family owned businesses.

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT PROFILES

RETIRED 2007– 2008

Meg Parsons - Secretary



Meg is currently employed as the Quality Manager of Karingal Inc. Meg began her work in the disability sector in the group supported employment branch of Karingal often working closely with DRAS. She has a Bachelor of Arts and has just completed her Masters degree in Disability Studies. Meg has membership of numerous industry working groups and has experience with the development and implementation of a range of Quality Assurance frameworks and major service systems changes. Meg is also a member of the Geelong InterAct committee (overseas aid) and the Newtown Primary Out of Hours care committee of management.

Nerida Mulvey



Nerida Mulvey is a 'later lawyer' having completed Bachelor of Law (Honours) at La Trobe University in 2006 and undertaken her Articled Clerkship with Coulter Roache Lawyers during 2007. Nerida's interest in the disability sector stems from her first career as a social worker where she worked in a range of settings including public welfare, occupational rehabilitation, acute and community health and bereavement support. She enjoyed diverse roles throughout this 22 year career including direct service work, team leadership and management. Now that her three children are young adults she is pleased to have the opportunity to contribute in a different way, as a Board member of DRAS.

DRAS - STAFF PROFILES



Cathy Bolger - Senior Advocate

“Cathy has a Bachelor of Social Work degree and Diploma of Social Welfare along with formal business management qualifications. Cathy brings skills and experience in the social welfare areas of family services, homeless services, aged care, tenancy, consumer rights and vocational rehabilitation. Cathy is also an Honorary Justice of the Peace.”



Paula Holey - Advocate

Paula has a Bachelor of Arts, a Bachelor of Social Work and a Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training. Paula was the Literacy Trainer at the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind in 2001. She has also been a sessional facilitator at the Gordon Institute of TAFE and Geelong Adult Training and Education. Paula brings to this position personal understanding of issues experienced and barriers faced by people who live with a disability, as she is living with a vision impairment.



Alanna Poynton - Administration Officer & Project Worker

Alanna has a Bachelor of Arts (Psychology Honours) and many years of work experience in Administrative roles. In March 2007 Alanna also commenced a Form Assist Project Worker. Alanna has brought a high level of enthusiasm and dedication to the service that the agency provides.



Kay Goldsworthy - Administration Officer

Since moving to Geelong after selling a business in the Wimmera, Kay has worked in Office Administration, both in voluntary and paid positions. She has completed an IT Certificate at the Gordon and enjoys puppy walking for the Vic Dog Squad. Kay is pleased to be working with DRAS and is continuing her volunteer works at Volunteering Geelong.

DRAS - STAFF PROFILES (CON'T)

Troy Duffin - IT Support



Troy has been a PC/IT enthusiast for about 15 years and has been doing website and graphic design as a hobby since 2001. Troy is currently working as a technician at Western Heights College, but also helps out friends and family when they have computer troubles. Troy is currently maintaining the DRAS website.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DRAS would like to formally thank the following organisations and individuals for their generous and substantial support in 2007— 2008

FaHCSIA

North Geelong Computer Sales & Services

United Way

Myers St Dental Clinic

Geelong Community Foundation

Marilyn Piper

Jenny Syme - Active Care

Dianne Thompson

Troy Duffin

Carol Morgan

Carol Okai - BDRC

Pam Clarke

TAP into Employment

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 30 June 2008

	2008	2007
	\$	\$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Government Grants	102,932	94,551
Interest Received	1,066	20
Donations	0	0
Other Operating Income	55,769	28,158
Net Increase in Payables	-6,712	2,119
Employee Entitlements	-102,776	-84,651
Payments to Suppliers	-45,397	-37,987
<u>Net Cash Used in Operating Activities</u>	<u>4,882</u>	<u>2,210</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Payments for Purchase of Fixed Assets	2,291	0
<u>Net Cash Used in Operating Activities</u>	<u>2,291</u>	<u>0</u>
NET INCREASE IN CASH HELD	2,591	2,210
CASH AT BEGINNING OF PERIOD	64,064	61,854
CASH AT END OF PERIOD	<u>66,655</u>	<u>64,064</u>

Represented by:		
Cash on hand	100	100
Cast at Bank	16,991	13,314
Term Deposits 116301953	17,875	19,901
Term Deposits 129011771	31,689	30,749
	<u>66,655</u>	<u>64,064</u>

STATEMENT BY THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

The Board of Management declare that in their opinion the financial report of Disability Rights & Advocacy Service Inc for the year ended 30 June 2008 complies with Australian Accounting Standards. Funding provided by the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs has been expended in accordance with the purposes of the Agreement in provision of disability advocacy assistance.

Robyn Van Ingen
Chairperson



Tim Noonan
Treasurer



Dated this 15th day of October 2008

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 30 June 2008

	2008	2007
Equity	\$	\$
Members Funds	50,118	67,379
Operating Results	10,292	(17,261)
SURPLUS OF TRUST FUNDS	60,410	50,118
Represented by		
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash on hand	100	100
Cash at bank	16,991	13,314
Term Deposit 116301953	17,875	19,901
Term Deposit 129011771	31,689	30,749
Total Current Assets	66,655	64,064
NON CURRENT ASSETS		
Furniture & Fittings @ WDV	130	156
Plant & Equipment @ WDV	4,976	3,961
Total Non Current Assets	5,106	4,117
TOTAL ASSETS	71,761	68,181
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Payables	6,904	7,758
GST Owing	4,827	2,805
Trade Creditors	(380)	7,500
Total Current Liabilities	11,351	18,063
TOTAL LIABILITIES	11,351	18,063
NET ASSETS	60,410	50,118
	(0)	-

A full set of the financial reports are available on application from the DRAS office, please telephone (03) 5221 8033.

PROFIT & LOSS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

	2008	2007
Grant—FaHCSIA	102,932	94,551
Form Assist Grant	13,022	-
Other Income	1,901	1,977
Interest	1,066	2,795
Members Fees	25	35
Voices Community Dev Program	17,470	-
Sub Lease	8,351	8,351
United Way	15,000	15,000
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
Advertising	1,194	473
Auditor	375	375
Bank Charges	137	122
Computer expenses	-	-
Cleaning	920	896
Consultant	5,000	-
Depreciation	1,302	2,351
Group Leaders	-	-
Insurance	2,911	2,752
Kitchen & Catering	363	357
Legal Fees	-	-
Miscellaneous	2,179	423
Minor Equipment	251	2,330
Office Supplies	6,765	6,915
Postage	212	280
Program Expenses	4,960	5,588
Rates	1,571	1,611
Rent	10,500	10,200
Salaries & Wages	94,290	77,681
Subscriptions	867	729
Superannuation	8,486	6,970
Telephone & Internet	4,771	2,858
Training	-	-
Utilities	1,282	1,227
Workcover	1,139	832
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 149,475	\$ 124,970
NET PROFIT	\$ 10,292	\$ (17,261)

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT



10 Station Street
Norlane Victoria 3214

PO Box 16
North Shore VIC 3214

Telephone
03 5278 9500

Facsimile
03 5272 1122

Email
accounting@sjcanny.com.au

ACN 066 220 326
ABN 61 066 220 326

To the Members,

Disability Rights & Advocacy Service Incorporated

Scope

We have audited the financial report of Disability Rights & Advocacy Service Incorporated for the year ended 30 June 2008. The Disability Rights & Advocacy Service Incorporated Board of Management is responsible for the financial report. We have conducted an independent audit of the financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the members.

Our audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free of material misstatement. Our procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the financial report is presented fairly in accordance with Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia, the Associations Incorporation Act (Vic) and the Association's Constitution so as to present a view which is consistent with our understanding of the Disability Rights & Advocacy Service Incorporated's financial position, the results of its operations and its cash flows.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Audit opinion

In our opinion the financial report present fairly in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards, other mandatory professional reporting requirements, the Associations Incorporation Act (Vic) and the Association's Constitution the financial position of Disability Rights & Advocacy Service Incorporated as at 30 June 2008 and the results of its operations and cash flows for the year then ended.

S J CANNY PTY LTD


G R Dew CPA
10 Station Street Norlane Vic 3214

Date: 30 September 2008



DISABILITY RIGHTS & ADVOCACY SERVICE INC

38 Myers Street
GEELONG VIC 3220

Phone: (03) 5221 8033

Fax: (03) 5223 2701

E-mail: info@dras.org.au

Web: www.dras.org.au