

autism spectrum AUSTRALIA

39TH ANNUAL REPORT



Report from **BOARD CHAIR AND CEO**

The Annual Report takes on a new look this year. It has been designed to give an overview of some key highlights of each of the services as well as include a copy of the concise financial report for the year ending 31 December 2007. A separate profile document is also being produced by Autism Spectrum Australia to showcase a more in-depth description of its services and outline its future directions. This profile will be valuable for all of our stakeholders including all levels of government but it will be particularly pertinent for new families, potential staff and in attracting new donors.

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) is now in its 43rd year. This is its 39th Annual Report since it became a company in 1969. The organisation is continuing to grow and strive for its vision of overcoming the isolation of autism. 2007 was an important year because the foundations for future growth were laid through a focus on service delivery, exploring new partnerships and an ongoing assessment of the needs of the community.

Aspect was in contact with 5,091 people with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in 2007. The number

The financial results recorded in 2007 exceeded targets with turnover growing to \$26.14m compared with a target of \$25.04m and generating a surplus of \$1.13m compared with a budgeted surplus of \$561,000.

ADRIAN FORD

2007 was an important year because the foundations for future growth were laid through a focus on service delivery, exploring new partnerships and an ongoing assessment of the needs of the community.

PETER WERNER BOARD CHAIR



The financial results recorded in 2007 exceeded targets with turnover growing to \$26.24m compared with a target of \$25.04m and generating a surplus of \$1.13m compared with a budgeted surplus of \$561,000. The strength of the organisation's financial position with three successive surpluses allows the organisation to help manage the risks involved in continuing to work towards a greater national presence.

This Annual Report presents the first major opportunity for the organisation to showcase its new logo. The new logo, which strengthens the brand and focuses on the company's full name Autism Spectrum Australia, is shown on the cover of this report. The decision to revise the logo was made by the Board following a disciplined approach of engaging external marketing, branding and design expertise in consultation with carers and management. The symbol is an interpretation of the word 'spectrum' and alludes to the multifaceted nature of autism spectrum disorders.

A new strategic plan commenced in 2007 designed around six key stakeholders: people with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and their families, staff, governments as funders, donors, partners and the Board. Senior Management reported regularly to the

Thank you to our supporters

BEQUESTS • Estate of Kathleen Breen • Estate of Sybil Daphne Tickle • Estate of Leslie George Freund CLUBS AND GROUPS • 2CH Massey Park Social Golf Club • Ahepa Australasia - Chapter Arete • Artarmon Masonic Hall Company • Bateau Bay Bowling Club • Bellbird Committee • Belrose Women's Bowling Club • Botany RSL Sub-branch Club • Bulli Social Fishing Club • CAF Community Fund • Canterbury Bulldogs League Club • Canterbury Hurlstone Park RSL Club • Castellorizian Ladies Auxiliary • Chester Hill — Carramar RSL Club • Chester Hill RSL and Bowling Club • Club Ashfield • Coogee Patchwork Group • Corrimal Leagues Club • Corrimal Uniting Church Op Shop • Dapto Wattle Club • Dee Why RSL Club • Denistone East Solo Group • EBP Sports Women's Bowling Club • Fraternity Bowling and Recreation Club • Harbord Public School • Hornsby RSL Club • Hunter Association of Teachers Aides Special (HATAS) • Illawarra Jazz Club • Inner Wheel Club of Wollongong • Kariong Public School • Lakemba Chapter No 11 • Lions Club of Engadine • Lions Club of Frenchs Forest • Lions Club of Woonona • Macquarie Links Charity Challenge • Macquarie Street Social Club • MasoniCare • Men of League — Northern Rivers/Gold Coast Branch • Moriah College • Mortdale Chapter No 36 • Mortdale RSL Club • Mt Pritchard and District Community Club (Mounties) • Northbridge — Cammeray Masonic Hall • NSW Masonic Auxiliary • P&F Central Coast School • P&F Hunter School • P&F South Coast School • P&F South East Sydney School • P&FVern Barnett School • P&F Western Sydney School • Pittwater RSL Club • Riverwood Legion & Community Club • Rotary Club of Cobar



Board on progress against the strategies and actions set out in the plan and 25 priority key performance indicators (KPIs) set by the Board. The organisation achieved or exceeded the target in 18 of the KPIs, a strong result which demonstrates the commitment to the plan.

The Board had one of its regular reviews during 2007, in which it confirmed its goal of Aspect having a national role in service provision. The relationship with Autism SA has continued and new opportunities are being explored in other states.

In line with the national focus, during the year Aspect became the Australian reseller of AutismPro® - an interactive web-based tool for families and services working with children with an autism spectrum disorder. It is anticipated that over time AutismPro®

The NSW State Government is also continuing to prioritise autism and is showing its support through significant additional funding initiatives. In 2007 it funded a new case management program for children with autism who had challenging behaviour and then later in the year provided a further \$300 000 to extend Aspect's Diagnostic Assessment Service. The NSW Department of Education & Training supported by the federal Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations (DEEWR) continue to support the expansion of our schools program with an additional 19 in 2007 and a further 60 places so far in 2008 for students Aspect's school system. This makes a current total of 572 places across Aspect's six schools.

Planning began after Aspect and the Australian Advisory Board on Autism Spectrum Disorders



Employees' sense of passion and commitment for Aspect had grown from 73% in 2003 to 85% in 2007. The staff's favourable perception of progress in the organisation grew from 63% in 2003 to 75% in 2007.

will yield significant results, particularly in empowering families in regional and remote Australia. This tool compliments traditional services and is in line with the organisation's desire to strengthen its services to families and build their capacity in their community.

Prior to the 2007 federal election campaign the then Howard Government announced a new federal funding package called the 'Helping Children with Autism Program'. The program was endorsed by the then Labor Opposition. Since winning the election the Rudd Labor Government has continued to develop this program which will see \$192m spent on services and training over the next 5 years.

announced they will co-host the Asia Pacific Autism Conference (APAC 09) at the Sydney Convention Centre, Darling Harbour from 20 to 22 August 2009. The theme 'Connecting Today: Inspiring Tomorrow' will bring researchers, people with autism, families, educators and practitioners from across Australia, Asia and the Pacific together for the first time. The Conference will provide opportunities for participants to build relationships, explore intervention strategies, present new developments in research, celebrate experiences and achievements and raise awareness about autism. The Conference Program is being designed around several streams including the Life Span issues facing a person with an ASD; Family Life,

Thank you to our supporters

- Rotary Club of Dapto Rotary Club of Dee Why Rotary Club of Engadine Rotary Club of Marrickville Rotary Club of Newcastle
- Rotary Club of Rose Bay Rotary Club of Silverwater and Homebush Bay Ryde City Womens Bowling Club St George Leagues Club
- Sutherland United Services Club Terrigal Walk & Talk Group The Welfare Fund United Way Queensland United Way Sydney Walters Mining Social Club • Wests Ashfield • Wests Illawarra • Wings Away Inc NSW • Wollongong Bulls Rugby League Football Club • Wollongong Church of Christ • Wollongong Collegians Rugby League Football Club • Wollongong RSL Bowling Club • Wollongong Uniting Church Tea Shoppe • Woonona Bulli RSL Memorial Club • Woonona Womens Bowling Club CORPORATE DONORS • A H Beard • Albert Investments • A-List Entertainment • Allco Finance Group • Alstom Limited • Andrew Taylor Management • Anthea Crawford Martin Place • ANZ Northern Region • AON • Arthur C Easy Jewellers • Australian Broking & Risk Services • Australian Chamber Orchestra • Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA) • Avon Cosmetics • AXE Group • Axxia • B O'Shea Plumbing • Babcock & Brown • Barista Basics • Bather's Pavilion • BBC • Bellachara • Berlei • Bonville International Golf Resort • Bradfield Partners • BridgeClimb • Captain Cook
- Cruises Carloopenna Investments Casella Wines Unit CGI Australia Cicero Club Crocodile Collins Debden Company B
- Copthorne Hotel Bay of Islands De Bortoli Wines Dermalogica Detakel Pty Ltd Dior Dolphin Watch Cruises Jervis Bay



Family Functioning and Family Resilience; Epidemiology, Causes and Diagnosis; and Autism in Australia and the Asia Pacific Region. APAC 09 will further strengthen our profile.

Aspect is very aware of the importance of understanding carer and staff needs. In 2003, regular Staff and Carer Surveys commenced on a biennial basis. These surveys are managed independently by the Voice Project at Macquarie University, Sydney.

In 2007 carer satisfaction with Aspect was at 91% - up 8% from 84% in both 2005 and 2003 while 85% of carers were favourable about Aspect's services – up 13% from 2005. Overall, carers were satisfied with the staff at Aspect (92% Favourable), with carers respecting Aspect staff (95%), believing they are competent (92%) and friendly (96%) and that Aspect had a strong focus on achieving positive results for clients (92% Favourable).

Employees' sense of passion and commitment for Aspect had grown from 73% in 2003 to 85% in 2007. The staff's favourable perception of progress in the organisation grew from 63% in 2003 to 75% in 2007. Of the 32 domains examined in the survey, non-profit organisations on average generate scores of more than 80% favourable in 7 of the 32 domains. Aspect had scores of 80% or more in 10 domains in the 2007 survey including 3 domains over 90%. These were teamwork, job satisfaction and staff sense of mission and value. In 2003 Aspect only scored over 80% in just 2 domains. This has been a dramatic and important shift.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Aspect's patron John Doyle for his continued active support. His standing, popularity and reputation around the country have generated significant media for Aspect, raising the profile of the organisation and, more importantly, that of the experience of families who have a child with an autism spectrum disorder.

We would also like to thank every donor and supporter of Aspect. 2007 was an amazing year for fundraising where the net amount raised was over \$1.3m – the best result for many years – all due to the generosity of so many donors

This report acknowledges the dedication and outstanding commitment of all members of the Board who freely give their time to Aspect and provide its governance. The Board acknowledges those people who sit on Board Committees to assist Board members in their deliberations. The report thanks each person for their thoughtful contribution and generosity of spirit to Aspect and the autism sector it serves.

The report also acknowledges the excellent contribution of Aspect's entire staff. It is the staff that make Aspect what it is through their commitment to providing the best possible services they can, using their exceptional accumulated experience with an innovative mindset. Aspect through its staff is continually developing the quality and type of service provision in partnership with families of people with an ASD and their communities. Thank you all for making Aspect a very special place.

Adrian Ford
Chief Executive Officer

Peter Werner Board Chair

A Concluding Comment from the Board Chair

The 39th AGM marks the conclusion of my term as Board Chair. Keith Perkin will become the new Board Chair effective from the close of the AGM. It has been an honour and privilege to serve this wonderful organisation. In the past five years much has been achieved. In particular we have clarified that our role is to be a service provider of autism-specific services and a systemic advocate highlighting the issues faced by the autism community. We have agreed on a new constitution and a new name – Autism Spectrum Australia or Aspect for short. We have grown from a New South Wales based organisation to one which is having an increasing national reach.

I am indebted to my colleagues on the Board for their generous support throughout this period of marked change for the organisation. I also want to thank the staff led by Adrian Ford, the Chief Executive Officer and his Senior Management Team. It has been a real partnership between Board and Management during the whole of this period and I believe this has played a significant role in strengthening the organisation and encouraging its development over the last five years. Finally I want to thank all the members and supporters of Aspect for their contribution to the growth of Aspect, along with the New South Wales and the Commonwealth Governments for the ongoing funding of this enterprise.

I plan to remain on the Board taking a particular interest in fundraising and I want to wish Keith Perkin all the very best – it is a fabulous organisation of which to be a part. Thank you.

Peter Werner



Treasurer's Report

Aspect has had a good year from a financial perspective. 2007 has seen the benefit of a number of changes implemented in recent years. The organisation is well placed to deal with a period that has the potential to deliver unprecedented growth and to cope with the certainty of significant change.

Aspect generated a surplus for the year ended 31 December 2007 of \$1,130,427 (\$486,404 in 2006). This result is pleasing and well ahead of the budgeted amount of \$561,000. This variance of actual over budget is attributable to:

- a very successful year for fundraising and in particular funding generated from trusts & foundations,
- higher dividends due to a larger investment portfolio and good market conditions, and
- some savings in salaries due to vacancies as well as the timing of some programs.

While the surplus is pleasing, it is quite small in terms of the overall turnover of the organisation and leaves very little margin for error. The Finance Team have developed a strong budget process which is closely linked to the Strategic Plan. This plan is rolled out across the organisation and requires the cooperation and acceptance of accountability by all staff.

More specifically, income for the year increased by 12% to \$26,240,610 compared with the previous year, while expenditure increased by 10% to \$25,110,183 producing the surplus of \$1,130,427. Government funding continued to be the major source of income for Aspect - 81% of total income (the same in 2006). Education & Research accounted for most of the expenditure (69%) compared to 68% in 2006. Central Office administrative costs increased to 10% level

Fundraising continued to provide an invaluable contribution, generating \$1,311,161 for the 2007 year, representing 5% of total income...





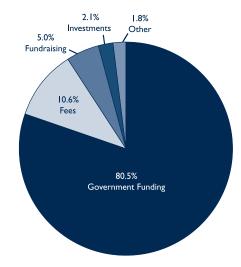
(compared to 8.5% in 2006) which is attributable to plans for future growth and incorporates new positions in the Senior Management team, Learning & Development, IT and Finance.

The increase in income was mainly due to a 12% increase in government funding to \$21,129,066, up from \$18,932,938 in 2006. With new funding programs being introduced throughout the year, this increase shows the confidence that governments have in Aspect's capacity to deliver services to our clients. The funding was applied to the continued expansion of our school and satellite programs, as well as to meet increasing award costs and other costs subject to CPI increases.

Fundraising continued to provide an invaluable contribution, generating \$1,311,161 for the 2007 year, representing 5% of total income (the same in 2006). These amounts are critical to the delivery of services that are either not funded, or not fully funded, by government.

Total fees for services delivered were \$2,776,871 which accounted for 11% of all income received.

INCOME





Aspect's investment portfolio was valued at \$5.69 million as at 31 December 2007 (an increase of \$1,380,000 compared to 31 December 2006) and recorded a return of 8%. During the course of the year the organisation made \$2.08m in investment purchases, sold \$480,000 in shares. Income of \$605,000 was generated from the investment portfolio and is reflected in the Income Statement. There were also unrealised losses of \$233,000 in the value of shares which is reflective of market conditions.

Expenditure was consistent with the Strategic Plan. Given the low margins within which we operate, Aspect continued to focus on improving internal controls aimed at ensuring all costs were carefully monitored.

Salary and wages costs increased by 12% to \$18,947,270 (compared with 18% in 2006). The increases were due to the ongoing expansion of the organisation's school and satellite class programs as well as the need to pay appropriate remuneration to our employees in line with changing market conditions and awards.

In regard to other expenses, travel costs, which represented our highest non-salary expense, were contained to an increase of 7% to \$882,584 (12% increase in 2006). This was assisted by petrol prices stabilising in 2007.

Insurance premiums continued to reduce for the third successive year (\$486,922 in 2005, \$457,055 in 2006 and \$320,198 in 2007). The main reason was the decrease in general insurance as a result of a change in insurance brokers that provided access to more favourable terms. Other costs were in line with the 2007 budget.

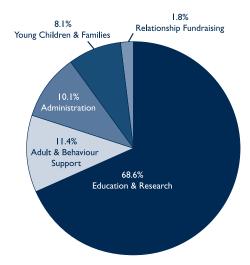
Consequently, from a net asset point of view, the organisation's financial position improved by 14% to \$7,099,548 in 2007, up from \$6,238,027 in 2006. Liquidity remained strong with cash and cash equivalents increasing by 98% to \$4,166,802 at the end of 2007 from \$2,102,977 at the end of 2006. The main reason was the \$2m increase in government advances.

My sincere thanks go to my colleagues on the Board, particularly those on the Finance & Audit Committee, for their support and focus on the financial operation of Aspect. Special thanks are extended to the organisation's Management and particularly to the Director, Corporate Services, Mr David Renneberg and his team for their skill, commitment and professionalism in the management of Aspect's finances.

Weston Ryan

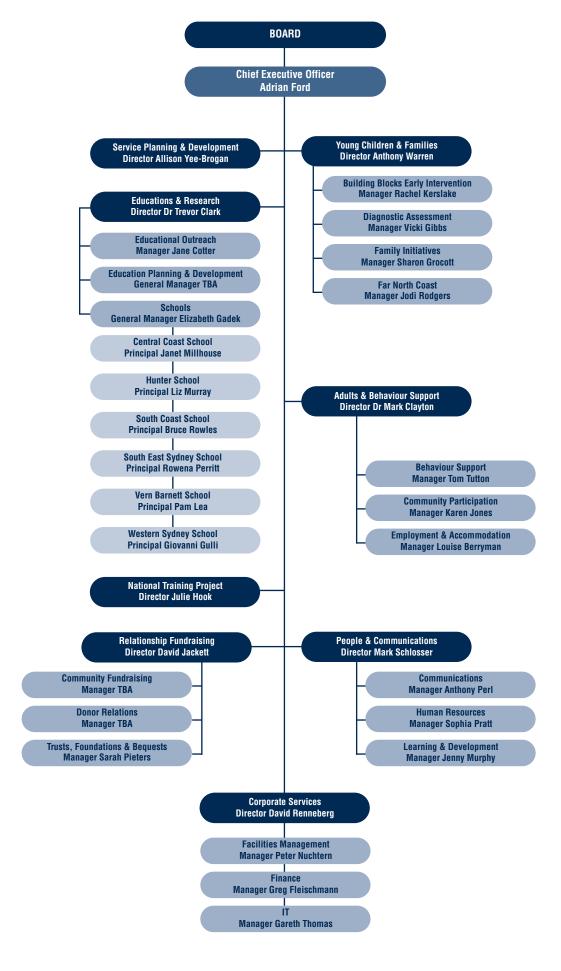
Honorary Treasurer

EXPENDITURE





Autism Spectrum Australia Organisation Chart





REVIEW OF SERVICES

Young Children & Families

Young Children & Families covers the important areas of diagnosis and early intervention as well as building capacity for families and the community. 2007 saw Young Children & Families with thirty-four staff (25.5 full-time equivalent positions) operating from 14 service locations including six regional locations, delivering services to 3,586 clients (excluding service providers).

Autism Information Line

The Autism Information Line is often the first point of contact for many parents and carers and service providers seeking information about autism, Aspect and local services, and practical information regarding interventions. The service is staffed by two part-time positions including the coordinator who provides leadership regarding service standards, supervision for intern psychology graduates when available, and takes responsibility for continuous improvement of the service.

There was a significant increase in family member's contacting the service in particular there was an increase in the number of families with a newly diagnosed very young child. The main reasons parents contact the Line continue to be for behaviour management support, and for information regarding referral to diagnostic services and early intervention services. The highest number of calls (450) occurred during the month of May (coinciding with Autism Week) although generally the number of calls was consistent across the year in the 250-350 range per month.

Diagnostic Assessment Service

During 2007, 130 diagnostic assessments including some developmental assessments were completed across various locations. In addition to providing

specialist diagnostic assessment the team also provides training on diagnostic assessment and contributes to broader policy in terms of developing national guidelines on assessment.

In July 2007 the NSW Government provided a non-recurrent grant of \$335,000 to establish an itinerant regional diagnostic assessment service. The service has already delivered assessment blocks to parents and carers in regional areas including the Far North Coast, the Mid-North Coast and the Central West region of NSW.

Building Blocks Early Intervention

Building Blocks delivers a transdisciplinary early intervention service including centre and home-based services, consultancy, education and support programs.

159 families received either a home-based or centrebased early intervention program funded for the full year.

In addition to the funded places Building Blocks provided initial consultations and support to another 237 families during 2007.

During the latter part of the year the team established a new South Coast early intervention service and provided initial training for two regional service providers (House With No Steps: Little Learners in Forbes, and Woodstock Support Inc in Albury) who will, with ongoing support from Building Blocks, implement its Starting Blocks program from 2008.

Building Foundations

Building Foundation is a DVD and accompanying manual that is designed to assist families and other service providers caring for a child recently diagnosed with ASD. This resource was launched at the State Library on 27 November 2007. It was developed by Aspect with funding provided by the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability & Home Care (DADHC). A feature of the resource is that the 30 minute DVD has been translated into seven community languages.

Thank you to our supporters

Elizabeth Arden • Emirates • Energy Australia • Ernst & Young • Forty-One Restaurant • Four Seasons • Freehills • Gai Waterhouse Racing Stables • General Reinsurance Australia Ltd (Gen Re) • George Campbell & Co • Get Cooking • Grace Cosmetics • Greater Union

- Hellman Worldwide Logistics Henry Davis York Lawyers Hoyts Hunter Douglas Infusions Cooking School Johnson & Johnson
- Joico Kingfisher Bay Resort KPMG Laderma LFS Health Club & Spa L'Oreal Man Investments Australia Marriott Hotel Sydney
- Marsh Maui Jim Mayne Investments McGraw-Hill Companies Mercure Hotel Windsor Mudgee Wine Grape Growers Association
- Nettex Australia News Magazines Nokia Nordoff-Robbins Music Therapy Australia Omega Smeg Optus Oz Trek Penfolds
- Penguin Books Perpetual Philanthropic Services PGA Tour Australasia Qantas Quest International Australia Random House
- Retravision Riedel Ritchies Stores Riverside Theatres Sarantos Sealy Of Australia Sebel Reef House & Spa Sellers Group
- · Sharks Rugby League Club · Sharp · Sheads First National · Shoal Bay Resort & Spa · Simon and Schuster · Sinclair Consulting Group
- Sinclair Knight Merz (SKM)
 SKYCITY Grand Hotel
 Sleepmaster
 Solar Springs
 Speedline Fencing
 Stanley Rogers
 Sydney Aquarium • Sydney Tower • Sydney Tower Restaurant • Tattersalls Club • The Arthouse Hotel • The Good Guys - Ballina • The Restaurant Art Gallery of NSW • The Rocks Walking Tours • Trans-Tasman Business Circle • Tulloch Wines • Tuscany Wine Estate • Ulladulla Guest House



Building Links

Building Links is a NSW Health funded program which provides education and support workshops to parents and carers of children recently diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder.

During 2007 NSW Health confirmed that this program will be re-funded for a further three year period. Building Links has one full-time equivalent staff member. During 2007 138 parents and carers attended workshops delivered in Concord, Homebush, and Tamworth. A workshop targeting grandparents was also well attended (74 grandparents).

Far North Coast Centre for Autism

Far North Coast Centre for Autism provides the Building Blocks centre-based early intervention program for 30 children and their families each year in partnership with five local service providers in Lismore, Casino, Ballina, Byron Bay and Tweed. In addition the Centre, based at Alstonville supports many members of the community who contact them seeking information and support. 1,500 enquires were received by the centre for information, support and consultancy; approximately 100 members of the community attended various training programs and 20 diagnostic assessments were completed. The centre continues to deliver a "Someone to turn to..." parent support program with 25 trained volunteers supporting 28 parents and carers.

The federal Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs evaluation of the program was completed in 2007 and produced some extraordinary results. These included statistically significant progress for a range of child development domains. For example, a range of educational outcomes were highly statistically significant including for functional communication, self care, adaptive and motor skills.

Regarding outcomes for parents and families, there were statistically significant improvements regarding parent knowledge, and understanding, about autism. Parents also reported extraordinary levels of satisfaction with the Starting Blocks early intervention program.

School Outreach Service

From the beginning of 2008 the School Outreach Service, renamed Educational Outreach, transferred to Education & Research. During 2007, 3 staff provided a range of consultancy, social skills programs, student workshops and school in-services in respect of 296 clients. This number included 64 Behaviour Intervention Service clients.

The demand for consultancy services from regional areas including the Far North Coast, Mudgee and the South Coast has continued to expand. Educational Outreach will provide consultancy support generated by Aspect's Education & Research as it establishes new school programs in regional areas.

"Someone To Turn To..." Parent Support Program

This program, which trains parents and carers who have a child with autism and who wish to volunteer to support other parents and carers, supported 117 clients during 2007. These included 89 parents and carers supported by 52 volunteers in the metropolitan Sydney program and 28 parents and carers supported by 25 volunteers on the Far North Coast.

Highlights included linking families from a range of culturally & linguistically diverse (CALD) speaking backgrounds including Mandarin, Japanese and Vietnamese. The service has also worked hard to involve fathers as both volunteers and clients and provided a variety of evening programs for fathers during 2007. The program now has a number of fathers supporting parents and carers including several grandfathers.

Thank you to our supporters

Unilever • Vince Maloney & Co • Vinta Group • Wes Hughes Pty Ltd • West End Pharmacy • West Engadine Pharmacy • Western Plains Zoo • Westpac • Wooroonooran Safari INDIVIDUALS • Mr David Agius • Mr R Anderson • Mr Simon Anderson • Mr George Andrews • Mr Phillip Andrews • Mrs Simone Arnott • Mrs Anne Athanasi • Mr Peter Banks • Mr & Mrs W & C Battaerd • Ms Caroline Battaerd

- Mrs Diane Beers Ms Sally Bell Mr Robin Bell Mr Tahir Biljic Mr Angus Bishop Mrs Donna Boughton Ms Helen Bristow
- Ms Talita Brooks Mrs Belinda Bussell Mr Arthur Byrne Ms Liz Byrne Mr M Cahill Mr John Cambridge Mrs Doreen Carter
- Mr Timothy Chambers Ms Wai Chan Dr Trevor Clark Mr T Cohen Mr Keith Connor Ms Emma Cowley Mr Matt Crowe
- Mr Michael Cunningham Mrs Nelly Cunningham Mr Andrew Daddo Mr & Mrs J W & L P Darcy Mrs Nadia Dargham
- Mr Gary Dawson Ms Sarah Day Mr Tommy Dean Ms Jennifer Denel Mr & Mrs P & M Devlin Mr John Doyle Mr Matt Dunn
- Mrs Enid Dwyer Mr Phil Emery Mr David Epper Mrs Megan Epper Mr James Fewtrell Mr Terry Fitzgerald Mr Gary Flowers
- Mr Adrian Ford Mrs Catherine Forster Mr Trent Franklin Mr Ivan Gale Mr Daryl George Mr Scott Gibbons Mrs Rhonda Gibbons Mrs Patricia Gibbs Mr Dave Gilbert Miss L Glynn Mr Scott Gourley Mrs Dorothy Grant Ms Georgia Grant Mr Kyle Grant Mr Peter Hadfield Ms Clare Hammond Mrs M Hanks Ms Kelly Hartigan Mr John Haydon



AutismPro®

In 2007 Aspect became the national re-seller for AutismPro® - a new web based tool for parents and professionals to help them in their management of children with an ASD. Young Children & Families is managing the sales and support for AutismPro. DADHC funds a help desk to support families to use AutismPro. The aim of the help desk project is to provide parents and carers with critical support to enable them to use AutismPro in their own home. More information is available on www.autismpro.com.au

Education & Research

The network of 6 schools and 57 satellite classes represent the majority of the organisation's service delivery area both in terms of staff and students. There were places for 513 students during 2007. The area of Education & Research oversees not just the operation of these classes, but also the research to continue to monitor the success of the program. During 2007, 85 students transitioned to more inclusive educational settings.

Comprehensive Educational Approach

Central to the education program is Aspect's Comprehensive Educational Approach which has been further developed, documented and promoted in the past year. As a result it now brings together a wide range of evidence-based practices and strategies for working with people with an ASD.

Satellite Class program

Nine new satellite classes were added in 2007 resulting from the plan to covert single classes into double classes along with the addition of a new regional program on the Far North Coast of NSW and an expansion in Sydney. Expressions of interest

have been received and planning commenced for the establishment of satellite classes in several regional areas of New South Wales (Far North, mid and lower North Coast, the Riverina and the Western region) along with new satellites classes for the Hunter, South East Sydney, Central Coast and South Coast Schools. To facilitate the development of autism educational services throughout NSW including Aspect's satellite program regional Autism Planning teams were established. Personnel from the NSW Department of Education & Training (DET), the Catholic Education Office (CEO) and Autism Spectrum Australia make-up the membership of these planning committees. Representatives from the DADHC are set to join these teams in 2008.

A descriptive write-up of the satellite class program was also accepted for publication in the *Journal of Exceptional Children* which is due for publication in 2008.

School highlights

South East Sydney School

- III students enrolled making it the organisation's largest school
- In 2007 a double infants and primary class was opened at St. Michael's Catholic school in Belfield bringing the total number of satellite classes to 9.

Western Sydney School

- Successfully underwent NSW Board of Studies registration and accreditation inspections. The School received the full five year K-12 registration and accreditation.
- The school received significant levels of financial support from a broad cross section of community organisations including the St. George Foundation, the Wetherill Park Rotary Club and the ANZ Foundation. Several local business groups assisted by repainting classrooms and redeveloping playgrounds.

Thank you to our supporters

Mr John Heathers • Mrs M Henderson • Mr Michael Hill • Mr Hockey • Mr Ferry Ie • Ms Kara Jeffree • Mrs Karen Johnson • Ms Judith Johnson • Mrs Shirley Jones • Lady Catherine Kater • Mr & Mrs George & Carla Kazzi • Mrs Olive Keane • Ms Catherine Kennedy • Mrs Marie Kerridge • Mr & Mrs LG & HL King • Mrs Ingrid Kingsbury-West • Mr Jeff Kingston • Mrs Marion Kingston • Mrs Lynnette Kok • Mrs Coral Kolmann • Mrs Nathalie Kulakowski • Mr & Mrs John & Alison Kupsch • Mr Andrew Langley • Mr Christopher Lee • Mrs Brenda Leece • Mr Guy Leech • Mr Michael Lucas • Mr & Mrs Nicholas & Rose Lucas • Mrs M Macarthur • Mrs B Mackay • Dr Neil Maclean • Mr Grant Maguire • Mrs Claudia Maher • Miss M Martin • Ms Ruth Martin • Miss Patricia Masterson Mrs Kathryn Matthew • Ms Victoria Maudson • Mr Lloyd McKeand • Mr Don Mckinnon Mrs Lyndall McNally • Mrs Anita Millard • Mrs Pam Morris • Mr Andrew Murphy • Mrs Mary Nelmes • Mr Glenn Newell • Mr Cliff Newman • Mrs Jenny O'Brien • Mr & Mrs Peter & Tammy Papas • Mr Alex Peade • Mr Wayne Pearce • Mrs Olive Pearse • Mr Dan Phillips • Ms Jacqui Phillips • Mr Greig Pickhaver • Mr Richard Plummer • Mr Timothy Powell • Mr Kevin Reid • Mr Matthew Reilly • Mr Michael Roberts • Miss Marie Robertson • Mr Mikey Robins • Ms Ana Robinson • Mr Jeremy Rolleston • Mr & Mrs Jake & Elizabeth Rowe • Ms Wendy Russell • Mr Anthony Segreto • Mr Saxon Shirley • Mr George Siderides • Mr Craig Simmons



Vern Barnett School

- Opened the organisation's third regional satellite class at Alstonville along with a double class primary satellite at Corpus Christi Catholic School at St. Ives.
- Successfully underwent NSW Board of Studies registration for the maximum period of five years for all sites. Further, the school was approved for initial accreditation to offer the school certificate for high school-age students.
- Received an Australian Government Block Authority Grant to build four new classrooms on the Forestville site. The consultation and planning process commenced in 2007 for the extension to the current facilities at the school. However, due to difficulties with the site and new council regulations a change to the original building plans took place. The decision was made to relocate Central Office functions from the Forestville site (currently shared by the Vern Barnett School) with the school to take-over the whole of the Forestville site which will involve renovations to the exiting spaces.

South Coast School

- Celebrated its 21st birthday in September with a range of activities including a school fun day and an anniversary dinner:
- The Outreach service, offered by the school (provides support to families, carers and other services providers throughout the Wollongong Region) supported 16 students and families

Central Coast School

- Successfully underwent NSW Board of Studies registration and accreditation inspections. One of the teacher's programs was identified by the inspectors as being "exemplary for all special schools in NSW".
- Following a lengthy planning process, the new school building project commenced in 2007. It is due for completion in 2008.
- Resulting from the successful implementation of the 'Success for Boys' mentoring project one student was

accepted by a local surf lifesaving group to train as a lifesaver.

Hunter School

- Celebrated its 30th birthday with a community family picnic at one of the Hunter's famous vineyards. Both past and current students, families and staff attended.
- DET confirmed a three-year extension to the existing lease at the Shortland Street base school site which was originally due to finish in 2008.

Research

Two major research projects were undertaken in 2007.

The first part of the Gresham Partners transition satellite class research project entitled: 'Where are they now? A preliminary study to evaluate the long-term outcomes for students with autism graduating from the Satellite Class Program' was completed in June.

The survey results revealed that the satellite class program provided a firm foundation for ongoing successful education for students with an ASD. Parental satisfaction with the satellite class program was extremely high and ongoing student progress was demonstrated. An overwhelming majority of students maintained a similar type of placement in the long-term to that accessed on transition.

The second major project entitled: 'Comparative analysis of early intervention programs for children with an ASD' is a collaborative research project to investigate interventions for children with autism. The aim of the project is to compare the Building Blocks early intervention centre based program and it's home based Early Play Program. Comparisons are being made in terms of a number of parent and child outcome measures. In addition, the project will also provide a cost / benefit analysis of the two approaches and provide an assessment protocol that can be applied to other early intervention programs. Analysis of the complete data will commence in 2008 with a final report due to be completed in the second half of 2008.

Thank you to our supporters

Mr Alan Smith • Mr Vince Sorrenti • Ms Judie Stephens OAM • Mr & Mrs David & Leona Taylor • Mr Andrew Taylor • Mr Peter Thompson • Mrs Anne Tidex • Ms Catherine Van Gelderen • Mr Andrew Van Kool • Mr R Vandervaere • Ms Annabelle Vant • Mrs Bianca Vern Barnett • Mrs Margaret Vernon • Ms Fiona Waldren • Mr Richard Wall • Mr Kenneth Washburn • Ms Nicki Washburn • Mrs Irene Watkins • Mrs Kate Watt • Mrs Golda Watt • Mr Peter Werner • Mrs Andrea Werner • Mr Luke Whitcher • Ms Pamela Whitehead • Mr Peter Williams • Ms Dee Wright • Mrs Karla Zolshan OAM TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS • Allens Arthur Robinson • ASX Reuters Charity Foundation • Baxter Charitable Foundation • Commonwealth Bank Staff Community Fund • Equity Trustees • Ernst & Young Foundation • Estate of Eric Norman Sweet • Estate of George Pitt Wood • Fairbridge Foundation • Gordon Brothers Charitable Foundation • Henning Family Foundation • Ivy H Thomas & Arthur A Thomas Trust • Knights Allan St Ruth Annuity Fund • Liangrove Foundation • Macquarie Bank Foundation • Michael and Mary Whelan Trust • Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation • Perpetual Trustee • Reserve Bank Benevolent Fund • St George Foundation • The Bluesand Foundation • The Caledonia Foundation • The Mabel and Franklin Barrett Trust • The Primary Club of Australia The R A Gale Foundation • Trust Company • Woodend Foundation.



Adults & Behaviour Support

Adults & Behaviour Support covers the areas of Behaviour Support, Community Participation, Accommodation and Employment.

Behaviour Support

The Behaviour Support Service consists of three specialist programs:

Behaviour Intervention Services (BIS)

- A specialist service for families, carers, schools and non-government agencies that support children and adolescents with a diagnosed disability and have an emerging or current challenging behaviour.
- In 2007, two BIS clinicians worked with 44 clients and their families and were involved in 219 individual consultations.

Recipe for Success

- An ASD specific course based upon principles arising from Parent Management Training – a well researched program that teaches parents to manage their child's behavioural problems in the home. It is designed for parents/carers of children with a diagnosis of an ASD aged from 3 to 15 who display some challenging behaviours.
- In 2007, it provided 24 days of intensive parent, carer and professional training to 208 participants.

Project CASS (Coordinated Access to Services and Support)

- A four year demonstration project which commenced in May 2007 and began servicing clients directly in August, providing a specialist case management and brokerage service in DADHC's Metropolitan North Region to support clients with autism and their families. The service specifically targets adolescents 12 to 18 years with autism with high to very high support needs who live at home and who are at-risk of losing their school or their home placement.
- Currently it provides services to 20 clients.

Capacity Building

Over the past 12 months Aspect has positioned its services to children and adults with challenging behaviour in NSW to include a contract based consultation and support service that goes beyond its funded target groups with the aim of building the capacity of other organisations to better understand

autism and to manage complex challenging behaviour. This arose through the development of a close working partnership with two organisations, House with No Steps (HWNS) and Sunnyfield who provide services to a large number of adults with autism and who often experience significant issues related to the behavioural complexities of their clients with an ASD.

The development of the Behaviour Support Team has enabled the organisation to build capacity in other agencies that do not have autism specialist knowledge. A memorandum of understanding with HWNS has further cemented the relationship between both organisations and work has commenced with HWNS on the Far North Coast of NSW across a range of new funded accommodation services.

Adults with Asperger's Disorder

TAFE NSW commenced an initiative in 2007 called 'Developing a Framework and Teaching Guidelines for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder' in partnership with Aspect for the provision of appropriate training programs for students with an ASD. This project will incorporate a bank of resources which will include an on-line training program for staff, support for mentors along with a tailor made course and reasonable adjustment options for students with ASD.

The Asperger's Social Club also had a successful year operating fortnightly in Burwood. It has served as a meeting place for people with Asperger's, a de-facto social skills training medium and importantly an opportunity for people with Asperger's to develop lasting friendships. During 2007, over 50 young adults with Asperger's Syndrome participated in the Social Club events. This program does not receive government funding and is currently supported through donations.

Supported Employment Program

The organisation's supported employment bush regeneration program, had 19 clients last year supervised by six staff. During 2007, Aspect contracted its bush regeneration services to three agencies — Kuring-gai Municipal Council, National Parks and Wildlife Service and Manly Council.

Highlights included:

- The successful program audit by Benchmark.
- The program received a Business Service Assistance Package grant of \$97,000 from 'Families, Housing,



Community Services and Indigenous Affairs' (FaHCSIA) to further develop particular components of the service.

- Secured a small contract with the Fred Hutley Retirement Village for some general garden maintenance work, and the program was able to establish a Program Coordinator position.
- The program achieved full capacity throughout 2007.

Community Participation

Two Community Participation Programs operated last year at Croydon and Carlton close to their client ceiling. The Northside Community Participation Program was closed in March 2007 after all clients were successfully transitioned to new services.

Highlights include:

- An exhibition of self portraits and other artworks at the Troy Horse Art Space in Alexandria during Autism Week.
- The sensory room at Allawah was revamped thanks to the generous donations of families. The staff at both sites have used their skills to provide new and interesting learning opportunities for clients. Client programs are constantly being evaluated, with many new meaningful activities being offered to the clients in the day programs such as yoga, art, music, dance, drama, gardening and swimming.

Accommodation Services

Aspect has operated two supported accommodation services at Wahroonga and Hornsby for the past 20 years. Following a review by senior management and the Board, the Board in June 2007 resolved to reauspice the two accommodation services. After a productive consultation process which commenced in August 2007 with the families, staff and DADHC, the process for the development of a tender for these two services was agreed and is in the final stages. It is anticipated that the tender process will be finalised by mid 2008.

Highlights include:

 Greater focus on client's individuals programs using Person Centred Program development and goal setting.

- Successfully recruited casuals resulting in decreased staffing costs.
- Additional staffing facilitated client transitions to new services.
- Wahroonga received capital works improvements
- Hornsby House was given approval for a long standing renovation and repair work which has now commenced under the direction of North Shore Community Housing.
- Staff from the BIS team provided individual programming and house programming for specific clients and one of the clients from the Hornsby home was transitioned to a supported employment program with support from his house staff.

People & Communications

During 2007, Aspect's human resource management, learning and development, communications, policy development, continuous improvement and corporate risk management programs were brought together in a new People and Communications team.

This development was a response to Aspect's continuing rapid growth, the tightening human services labour market, the need to more effectively manage communications strategies and Aspect's increasingly complexity operating environment.

Highlights include:

- Staff turnover continued to fall during the year and with a turnover of 13.2% in the year ending 31 December 2007, Aspect has a workforce with a turnover well below the norms of the disability sector in which it operates in.
- Early in the year, Aspect entered an agreement with a new salary packaging service provider which enabled the organisation to open up salary packaging to all Aspect staff other than casuals. This change was actively marketed internally with the result being that the number of staff salary packaging more than doubled during the year.



The sensory room at Allawah was revamped thanks to the generous donations of families. The staff at both sites have used their skills to provide new and interesting learning opportunities for clients.



- Several initiatives were introduced to further strengthen Aspect's recruitment strategies including a marketing program to highlight the benefits of working with Aspect; an innovative graduate recruitment program to target tertiary students completing special education courses in 2007; and a learning and development program to enhance managers' recruitment skills.
- During 2007, the Board approved changes to the Elizabeth Hoyles Staff Scholarship Scheme to create a new Staff Fellowship Program. The first staff fellowship was awarded to Vicki Gibbs who manages the Diagnostic Assessment Service. Ms Gibbs will use her Fellowship to undertake some evaluative research.
- A survey of carers was conducted in 2007, as part of an established two year research cycle by the Voice Project at Macquarie University. Client satisfaction was up seven points to 91% compared with results in 2005 and 2003. The cumulative scores showed that families overall were more satisfied than ever before.
- A separate survey of employees was also conducted by Voice Project with improvement shown in the two main indexes. The Passion or Engagement Index was 85% compared to 80% in 2005 and 75% in 2003 and the Progress Index (that refers to employee perceptions about organisational outcomes) had risen to 75% from 72% in 2005 and 63% in 2003.

Corporate Services

Corporate Services is responsible for overseeing the organisation's finance, IT and facilities management.

Highlights included:

- The continued prudent financial management of Aspect resulting in a surplus of just over \$1 million.
- The integrity of the fixed asset register was improved with a new policy introduced that ensured the verification and tagging of all assets at all sites.
- Overseeing the \$1.7 million redevelopment of the Central Coast School, including adding six classroom and a multi-purpose sensory room, new playgrounds and the restoration of the existing cottage. This project is due for completion in 2008.
- Based on the organisation's Strategic Plan a three year plan was developed for IT which ensures the security of existing investments, improves the value obtained from existing software, increases server capacity for future growth, expands the network and looks at new projects to assist business operations.

Conference presentations

During 2007 the following staff made presentations at the conferences and events listed below:

2007 Australian Biennial Conference on Autism Spectrum Disorders

Dr. Trevor Clark, Adrian Ford, Vicki Gibbs, Pauline Hunter-Knight, Karen Jones

Association for Behavioural Analysis InternationalDr. Trevor Clark and Anthony Warren

Australasian Tuberous Sclerosis Society's Scientific and Family Conference

Dr Tom Tutton and Natalie Willis

Australian Association Special Education Teachers Make It Happen: From Research to Classrooms Julie Hook (Keynote speaker)

Defence Force Recruiting Vicki Gibbs

Department of Education & Training, South Coast Seminar/Conference

lane Cotter

Early Childhood Intervention Australia (NSW chapter) Pauline Hunter-Knight

Far North Coast Early Intervention – Invest To Grow Outcomes

Anthony Warren

Autism Europe Congress: World of Possibilities (Oslo)

Dr. Trevor Clark

National Disability Services NSW - Disability Services – What's Next?
Pauline Hunter-Knight

Taume Flamer Kinght

New Children's Hospital Westmead, Autism Spectrum Disorder Conference

Jane Cotter

NSW Carers Conference

Emma Pierce and Rebecca Sutherland

Therapy ACT

Rebecca Sutherland and Mary-Ann Bedwani



Board Committees

Aspect's Board has four Standing Committees which overview the organisation. Each Board Committee is chaired by a Board Director, with at least one other Board Director present. Committee membership is approved by the Board.

The Board thanks the members of the committees and the staff who attend for their contribution and commitment to this important task.

Finance & Audit Committee

Members: Weston Ryan (Chair), David Foster, Malcolm McEwen, Peter Werner

In attendance: Adrian Ford, David Renneberg, Mark Schlosser

Client Services Committee

Members: Robert Pesavento (Chair), Gerry Gray, Lisa Beavan (parent), Associate Professor David Evans (University of Sydney), Ana Robinson (parent)

In attendance: Adrian Ford, Dr Trevor Clark, Dr Mark Clayton, Anthony Warren

Remuneration Committee

Members: Peter Werner (Chair), Malcolm McEwen, Keith Perkin

Research Committee

Members: Dr David Starte (Chair), Malcolm McEwen, Dr Mark Carter (Macquarie University), Associate Professor David Evans (Sydney University), Dr Chris Kilham (University of Canberra), Professor Trevor Parmenter (Sydney University), Dr Jacqueline Roberts (Sydney University),

Dr Natalie Silove (The Children's Hospital, Westmead), Dr Katrina Williams (Sydney Children's Hospital) In attendance: Adrian Ford, Dr Trevor Clark, Dr Mark Clayton

Long Service Awards

The following employees reached long service milestones during 2007, and will be recognised at the staff conference in October:

20 Years

Dr Trevor Clark Education & Research

15 Years

Anthony Warren Young Children & Families
Elizabeth Brennan Building Blocks Early Intervention
Margaret Bamforda Central Coast School

10 Years

Kaye Perry South Coast School Western Sydney School Nathan Henry Phillip McNulty Western Sydney School Stuart Davis South Coast School Vicki Walker Western Sydney School Robyn Missen Western Sydney School Ana Keramea South East Sydney School South East Sydney School Alison Begg Central Coast School Melinda Bowley

External Committees

The following staff members are involved in external committees as at 31 December 2007.

Adrian Ford, CEO – Australian Advisory Board on Autism Spectrum Disorders (Chairperson); DADHC Expert Advisory Group on Children and Young People with a Disability and their Families (Chairperson); National Disability Services (NDS) Children, Young People and their Families NSW subcommittee (Chairperson); Steering Group of the Ethics of Caring in a Good Society, hosted by Carers NSW and the St James Ethics Centre

Anthony Warren, Director, Young Children & Families

NDS – Children, Young People and their Families National subcommittee; Through The Maze Reference Group

Dr. Trevor Clark, Director, Education & Research – National Independent Special Schools Association (NISSA)

Dr. Mark Clayton, Director, Adults & Behaviour Support – DADHC Metropolitan North Restrictive Practices Committee

Elizabeth Gadek, General Manager, Schools – NISSA (Treasurer), DET / Aspect Autism State-wide Planning Team

Louise Berryman, Adults & Behaviour Support Manager – DADHC Metropolitan North Restrictive Practices Committee; Metropolitan North Post School Options

Giovanni Gulli, Principal, Western Sydney School – NISSA

Janet Millhouse, Principal, Central Coast School – Early Childhood Intervention Coordination Program (Secretary); NISSA

Liz Murray, Principal, Hunter School - NISSA

Pam Lea, Principal, Vern Barnett School – NISSA (Deputy Chair)

 $\label{eq:continuity} \begin{tabular}{ll} Rowena & Perritt, Principal, South & East \\ Sydney & School - NISSA \\ \end{tabular}$

Katrina Kemp, Early Intervention, Hunter School Hunter – Early Intervention Providers;

Lara Cheney, Hunter School – Early Intervention Information & Service Coordination Agency



Government Funding

Aspect is very appreciative of the \$21.1 million it received from the Commonwealth and New South Wales Governments. The organisation would like to recognise and thank each Department for their considerable support.

Funding from the following government departments enable Aspect to offer services to the autism spectrum disorder (ASD) community that includes people with an ASD, families / carers and other service providers:

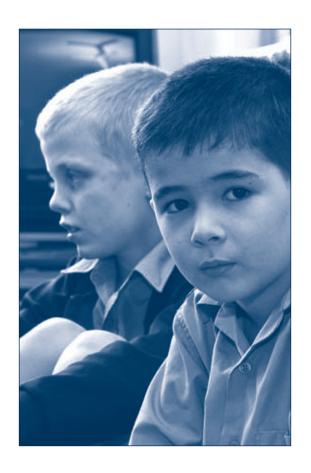
Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) – now known as the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)

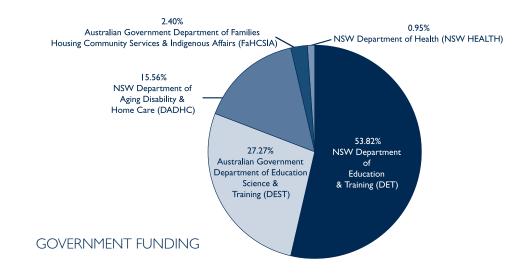
Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)

NSW Department of Ageing Disability and Home Care (DADHC)

NSW Department of Education and Training (DET)

NSW Department of Health (NSW HEALTH)







Relationship Fundraising

Thanks to the continued generosity of all supporters, gross income from fundraising activities grew by over 20% in 2007 to \$1.3 million. Income was received from a range of sources. To all those individuals and organisations that choose to support Autism Spectrum Australia, thank you.

The support Aspect receives each year from fundraising income is becoming increasingly important as services expand. The money is used to fund a large proportion of the Building Blocks early intervention service, the Autism Information Line and the parent support program, "Someone to turn to..."

Fundraising income is also used to supplement income from other sources which enable the organisation to resource and expand many other services including specialised education, diagnosis and assessment, programs for families, services for adults with autism and vital research into the effectiveness of services.

Aspect is privileged to receive support from many people who simply give because they see the need and want to make a difference. Thank you.

Thank you to the many corporations and groups that supported the organisation last year. Many organisation's, sponsored events, gave gifts in kind, provided support through their charitable foundations, encouraged their staff or members to give or undertook a fundraising event or activity. There was an increased level of support from Trusts and Foundations, Registered Clubs, social clubs, corporates and of course, the Parents and Friends Committees who made such a difference to the schools. Thank you.

Following is a list of some highlights of the past year. While the methods of fundraising that were employed were diverse, a common theme runs through all of them. The success came, at least in part, because of improved relationships with supporters. As these relationships have developed, so to has the understanding of the needs of supporters and consequently supporters have gained a better understanding of the organisation's needs and more importantly, the needs of the Aspect's families.

- The income from Trusts and Foundations tripled in 2007. Over \$400,000 was received from 30 different organisations. The growth can be attributed to continued support from the previous year and the improved profile of Autism Spectrum Australia and an increased awareness of ASD.
- Following the success in 2006 of two 'challenge adventures' (a group of people raise a certain amount of money in order to be able to participate in a trek or cycle ride overseas) in 2007, nearly

\$100,000 was raised by two different groups of intrepid explorers. One group chose to walk the Great Wall of China while the other group went to Vietnam. The China group comprised mums of children at the South East Sydney and Vern Barnett schools together with some family members and their friends as well as the principal of the South East Sydney School, Rowena Perritt. The Vietnam challenge was made up of members of the general public who were touched by the needs of the ASD community and wanted to make a difference. These 'challenge adventures' have proved how much fun fundraising can be. To all involved, thank you.

- Andrea Werner and Board Chair Peter Werner again led the organisation of the 5th annual Comedy Night. The event featured a host of hilarious comedians and a pair of fantastic MC's in HG Nelson and Roy Slaven aka Grieg Pickhaver and Aspect's Patron, John Doyle. A big thank you to these talented comics for giving their time and talent so generously and thanks also to the major corporate supporters for the evening particularly Allco Finance whose generosity ensured that the evening was a great financial success as well as being a fun night for all concerned.
- Board member, David Epper who, with help from his team of Kara Jeffree, Peter Banks and Trent Franklin ensured the 7th annual Celebrity Golf Day was a roaring success. Thanks also to the many sporting and media celebrities who gave generously of their time to raise funds by joining the corporate teams for a game of golf.
- Tens of thousands of dollars are received each year in the form of regular donations deducted from people's pay. Thank you to all our staff who choose to contribute this way and to people in many other organisations who choose to do likewise. For many years we have received significant support from the employees of Qantas and Ernst and Young and in 2007, following many years of discussion by one of our parents, Phil Robinson, Optus employees started to donate to us as well. Our thanks go to Phil for his patience, tenacity and the example that you have set that we hope will be followed by many others.

This organisation benefits from the commitment of parents, relatives, carers and other service providers. Donors no matter how large or small play a vital role in continuing to sustain services — thank you for making a difference to the lives of so many people. We hope that our relationship with you grows from strength to strength.



Corporate Governance INTRODUCTION

The Board of the Autism Spectrum Australia (or Aspect for short) applies a sound governance framework to the conduct of the Board. This framework is applied throughout Aspect, reflecting the belief that any shortcomings in governance could jeopardise Aspect's reputation and its ability to fulfil its obligations to people with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and their families, carers or guardians.

Aspect is accountable to a wide range of stakeholders with whom it interacts. These are people with ASD and their families, carers or guardians, the staff (including employees and volunteers), governments, donors, service partners and the Board itself.

This statement sets out the principles, policies and procedures the Board adopts to ensure the long-term health and prosperity of Aspect. It provides an overall governance framework and identifies the respective roles and responsibilities of the Board and management in setting the strategy and direction of Aspect and in managing and controlling the organisation.

Vision, Mission & Values

Aspect is committed to conducting its work with the highest standards of personal and corporate integrity. Aspect's vision (or aspiration) is overcoming the isolation of autism. Aspect's mission (or what it does) is that Aspect provides information, education and other services through partnerships with people with autism spectrum disorders, their families and communities.

Aspect's values are:

Aim high

Understand and communicate clearly

Take personal responsibility

Inspire and innovate

Show empathy

Make a difference

THE BOARD

Role of the Board

The Board of Directors exercises the powers vested in it by the Corporations Act 2001, and Aspect's Constitution and Regulations.

The Board is directly responsible to Aspect's members for the long-term health and prosperity of Aspect. The policies and practices outlined in Aspect's Corporate Governance Statement provide the framework which enables the Board's principal role to be achieved whilst ensuring that Aspect's activities are conducted ethically and in accordance with the law.

The Board charts the direction of Aspect and monitors management's performance on behalf of Aspect's members and other stakeholders mentioned in the introduction. It accomplishes this by:

- ensuring a skilled, effective and diverse Board with appropriate operating standards and procedures
- appointing, supporting, delegating to, evaluating and remunerating the Chief Executive Officer and providing for a management succession plan;
- setting the vision, and agreeing the strategic direction and business objectives of Aspect with management;
- ensuring resources are available to achieve its goals by developing with management and approving Aspect's three-year Strategic Plan, from which is developed its annual Action Plan and budget, and by regular monitoring of performance using the Corporate Score Card against these plans and the operating and capital budgets;
- advising, approving and monitoring management's activities and performance to ensure the Strategic Plan is being met;
- ensuring a risk management framework is in place to identify and manage those risks that threaten the reputation, earnings, assets and the basic capacity of Aspect;
- approving appropriate policies, guidelines and procedures and ensuring there is a compliance process in place to monitor adherence;
- ensuring the integrity of internal controls for financial and management information systems;
- maintaining adequate personal liability insurance for current and past Directors, and
- ensuring Aspect's activities are conducted ethically and transparently.

The authorities retained by the Board are:

- the appointment, evaluation and remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer
- material transactions not in the ordinary course of business:
- the approval of the three-year Strategic Plan, the annual Action Plan and the operating and capital budgets;
- the approval of changes to the vision, mission and values;
- · Aspect's regulations;



- approval of the statutory accounts including the Directors' report;
- insurance policy renewals for Directors and Officers insurance; and
- ensuring appropriate performance of, and undertaking ongoing due diligence with, the external auditors.

Aspect's activities are regulated by the Corporations Act 2001 and other State and Commonwealth laws as applicable, including the NSW Charitable Fundraising Act 1991.

Role of Management

The Board delegates responsibility for day-to-day management of Aspect's activities to the Chief Executive Officer. Primarily the Chief Executive Officer is responsible for implementing the Strategic Plan approved by the Board.

The Chief Executive Officer is appointed by the Board. Contractual, remuneration and other matters related to the Chief Executive Officer's appointment are reviewed by the Remuneration Committee. The Board Chair is the Board's principal formal contact with the Chief Executive Officer, however the Chief Executive Officer has unrestricted access to all Board Members and vice versa. The Chief Executive Officer leads the Senior Management Team.

The Senior Management Team comprises:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Director, Young Children & Families
- Director, Education & Research
- Director, Adults & Behaviour Support
- Director, Relationship Fundraising
- Director, People & Communications
- Director, Corporate Services
- Director, Service Planning & Development
- · Director, National Training Project

Role of the Board Chair

The Board elects annually the Board Chair and the other office bearers of Aspect as set out in the Constitution.

The key internal roles of the Board Chair are to:

- lead and facilitate the Board;
- ensure the Board is focused on achieving the vision, mission and strategic goals of Aspect;
- ensure that no one has excessive influence;
- maintain a professional working relationship and be

- the Board's formal point of contact with the Chief Executive Officer;
- set the agenda for each Board meeting, in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer;
- ensure the Board carries out appropriate assessments of Board performance, and
- ensure meetings are conducted effectively and that the minutes are signed as a true and correct record.

The main external roles of the Board Chair are to:

- represent the Board and Aspect, as appropriate, to its various stakeholders;
- act as a spokesperson, where appropriate, in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer; and
- chair its legally required annual and other general meetings.

Role of Individual Directors

The role of individual Directors under general law and Corporations Law include to:

- · act in good faith;
- exercise powers for proper purpose;
- retain their discretion in voting at meetings;
- · avoid conflicts of interest;
- · act honestly;
- act with the degree of care and diligence that a reasonable person in a like position in a corporation would exercise in the corporation's circumstances;
- not misuse information or their position, and
- not trade while insolvent.

Other roles include to:

- make reasonable inquiries to ensure that Aspect is operating efficiently, effectively and legally towards achieving its goals, and
- undertake diligent analysis of all proposals placed before the Board.

Confidentiality

A Director shall keep confidential all confidential information; and not disclose it to any person, except as required by law; with the prior written consent of Aspect; or to Aspect's agents, employees or advisers in the performance of the Director's responsibilities and duties.

No Director shall use any confidential information for the benefit of any person except Aspect.

If any confidential information is lawfully within the public domain then to the extent that the confidential information is public, a Director's obligations shall cease in respect of that confidential information.



If there is uncertainty as to whether any information is confidential information; or any confidential information is lawfully within the public domain, then that information is deemed to be confidential information and is not within the public domain, unless the Director is advised by the Board in writing to the contrary.

A Director shall maintain proper and secure custody of all confidential information; and use his or her best endeavours to prevent the use or disclosure of the confidential information by third parties.

A Director shall immediately deliver to Aspect all confidential information that is physically capable of delivery at the end of that person's term as a Director; and at any time at the request of a person authorised by the Board. Instead of delivering confidential information, the Board may direct the Director to destroy confidential information and certify in writing to Aspect that the confidential information has been destroyed. The Board may direct that confidential information contained in computer software or data be destroyed by erasing it from the magnetic media on which it is stored so that the information cannot be recovered or reconstructed.

A Director must not make any copy or summary of any confidential information, except if required to do so in the course of his or her duties as a Director. If a Director is required to make a copy or summary of confidential information in the course of the Director's duties and functions as a Director, the copy or summary belongs to Aspect.

A Director shall comply with these obligations regarding confidentiality at all times during and after that person's term as a Director.

Conflicts of Interests

The common law fiduciary duty of Directors is to act honestly and in the best interests of Aspect. This also overlaps with the Corporations Law that includes requirements that Directors not misuse position or information to gain an unfair advantage, act honestly and disclose conflicts of interest.

Potential conflicts of interest may include:

- a contract with Aspect; using confidential information for personal gain, and
- profiting from an opportunity that rightfully belongs to Aspect.

To manage conflicts of interests for Directors, the following guidelines are to be adhered to:

 Declare existing or potential conflicts to the Company Secretary.

- When a conflict of interest arises immediately advise the Board Chair in the boardroom.
- Directors who have a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the matter for discussion may, with the consent of the Chair, be present while the vote is taken.
- No financial or other benefit can be given to a related party of the Director unless approved by the Board.
- The Company Secretary shall ensure that a register of Interests is maintained.

Further to ensure their independence and absence of conflicts of interest, Directors may not be current employees of Aspect, or employed by Aspect within the last two years.

Board Composition and Size

Under Aspect's Constitution there can be up to ten Member-elected Directors for a term of three years. Also the Board can appoint up to two Boardappointed Directors.

At least one third of Member-elected Directors must retire from office at the Annual General Meeting each year; such retiring Directors are eligible for re-election;

The term of Board-appointed Directors is for twelve months but the Board may re-appoint a Boardappointed Director for further twelve month terms.

Directors appointed to fill casual vacancies must submit to election at the next general meeting. The attributes that Directors should bring to the Board include sound business judgement and a performance focus, empathy for people with ASD and their families, broad strategic thinking, a collegiate and team playing approach, a philosophical commitment to the objectives of Aspect, a willingness and capability to devote the required time to the Board's affairs, and undoubted reputation and integrity.

Nominations and Appointment of New Directors

No person except a Member-elected Director whose tenure has expired or a person recommended by the Board for election, is eligible for election to the office of Member-elected Director at any meeting unless:

 the prospective eligible candidate for the position of Member-elected Director, or



 any member intending to nominate a prospective eligible candidate for the position of Member-elected Director;

has at least 28 clear days before the General Meeting sent to the Secretary a notice in writing duly signed by two other members signifying the nominee's candidature for the office or the intention of such eligible candidate to nominate for the office of Member-elected Director. Notice of each and every candidature must be forwarded to all Members not less than 21 days prior to the meeting at which an election is to take place.

The Company Secretary advises members annually on the process they need to follow if they wish to nominate for the position of Member-elected Director.

Members wishing to nominate for the Board are encouraged to contact the Board Chair first so that a meeting can be arranged between the nominee, the Board Chair and at least one other Director to discuss the role and consider its rights and responsibilities. Not only is the Board looking for new Directors from time to time it is also wanting to ensure that new Directors will be prepared to become part of an effective team governing the organisation.

The Board aims to achieve a mix of qualifications, skills and experience, by taking into account the existing diversity of experience in the current Board and the strategic direction and progress of Aspect.

New Directors are required to undertake an induction of the Board and Aspect, its issues, current concerns, staff and financial position. This induction process may include meetings with Aspect's Senior Management, and may include Australian Institute of Company Directors training on board responsibilities and obligations, or other such training considered appropriate.

The current composition of the Board and Board Committees, together with background details on each Director, is set out in Aspect's annual report and on Aspect's web site.

Directors' Indemnity and Insurance Cover

Aspect's Constitution provides an indemnity to present and past Directors. As with other insurable risks, Aspect has insured Directors and officers against liabilities incurred by such a person in connection with the performance by that person of his or her position with Aspect except for a liability arising out of conduct involving wilful breach of duty or contravention of the Corporations Law.

Meetings of the Board and their Conduct

The Board meets eight times each year. The Board decides on an annual schedule of major items that are considered over the eight meetings along with regular items to monitor the organisation.

Meeting agendas are determined by the Board Chair in consultation with the CEO to ensure adequate coverage of strategic, financial and operating matters throughout the year. Details of meetings and attendances are set out in Aspect's annual report.

Meeting Procedures

To ensure Board meetings are constructive, the Board has adopted the following procedures:

- Proper and timely notice of meetings is provided to all Directors with an outline of the proposed business
- Board papers, that include clear resolutions on all papers for decision, are provided at least five days in advance
- The majority of the Board's time is spent on strategic issues rather than the day-to-day responsibilities of management
- An action schedule is maintained to ensure that all outstanding items or progress on implementation of approvals are dealt with
- A quorum is maintained throughout the meeting
- Complete focus is maintained on the issue during debate
- Debate occurs because it is essential to ensure the right decisions
- Open questions are posed to encourage debate
- Board meetings are chaired and facilitated by the Board Chair
- Within 5 working days, the minutes are produced and circulated to Directors
- Minutes are recorded in such a way that resolutions can actioned and monitored; and
- The Board Chair and CEO should not circumvent the process of the Board meeting
- The minutes of each Board meeting are approved by the Board as true and correct record of the meeting at the next Board meeting.

Board Decision Making

The Board when making a decision may need to take into account a number of factors including:

- their duties and responsibilities as Directors;
- strategic fit;



- · ethical fit;
- financial considerations;
- · strategic and operational risks;
- resource availability (internal/external and alternative use of resources);
- · political impacts;
- · key drivers and sensitivities;
- the inclusion of third party information on key assumptions;
- synergy effect for the business as a whole;
- community and stakeholders' perception of the decision;
- contingency plans in place to deal with unexpected developments; and
- monitoring and accountability mechanisms (if approved)
- incorporating key milestones and anticipated benefits.

The objective of the evaluation process is to ensure an appropriate balance of risk and return is achieved in the context of the operation of Aspect and what it stands for:

Although formal meeting practices can assist the efficient conduct of a meeting, such practices on the Aspect Board are not used to stifle discussion or push for a particular outcome which is obviously not accepted generally. In general voting or calling for motions is not a practice encouraged in the Aspect Board as such practices can risk factionalising the Board.

In the circumstance where there is not a consensus commitment to an outcome or where there is the situation where voting is required and/or directors want to record an abstention, the Board Chair clarifies what information is required to help the undecided directors and allow time for further discussion and consultation in order to reach a consensus decision. Once a consensus decision is reached Directors are expected to honour the decision both in and outside the Board.

Representation of Aspect

The Board expects the Chief Executive Officer to speak for Aspect and to manage communications with members, other stakeholders and the community generally. Directors other than the Board Chair and the Chief Executive Officer do not comment publicly on Aspect issues, unless specifically delegated.

The Board Chair and the Chief Executive Officer would normally confer with each other before making a significant public comment. Copies of all significant press releases are forwarded to Directors on the day of release. Directors are expected to keep the Board Chair and the Chief Executive Officer informed of any significant feedback about Aspect they receive from their networks.

Media

Aspect's media policy aims to maximise opportunities for coverage of activities and achievements and to minimise adverse publicity and any misleading information.

On significant media issues for Aspect, the Chief Executive Officer is the primary spokesperson. The Chief Executive Officer may from time to time authorise other senior managers and subject specialists to act as spokespersons on particular issues.

The Board Chair or Board delegate in consultation with the CEO will issue statements to the media when appropriate.

The Review of Board Performance

The Board undertakes a review of its performance from time to time to ensure that the expectations of all Directors are aligned, to confirm areas of successful performance and to identify those areas requiring further improvement as part of Aspect's commitment to continuous improvement throughout the organisation.

The review of Board performance includes:

- Directors' understanding of Aspect's goals and policies, the governance statement and conflicts of interest.
- performance in relation to ethics, integrity and probity;
- · compliance with legislation;
- Board communication and communication between the Board and Senior Management, and
- Board composition, committee structure, workload and procedures to ensure effective decision making.

A range of methods are available to the Board for such performance review. They can include:

- asking Directors to anonymously write comments on agreed parameters and send to a third party for correlation and presentation to the Board Chair and then to the whole Board for discussion;
- asking Directors to personally review their performance against agreed parameters and then having a Board discussion or an individual meeting with the Board Chair;
- the Board Chair having an individual discussion with each Director on agreed areas, and retaining an external facilitator to undertake a review process.



BOARD COMMITTEES

The Board has established a number of Standing Committees to assist in the execution of the Board's responsibilities. These Committees are a recognition that some areas of Aspect's activities require more concentrated effort and specialist skills and are an efficient use of Board resources. They do not abrogate any Director from his/her responsibilities and Committees are obliged to properly inform the full Board of their activities.

Each Board Committee is chaired by a Board Director. There is at least one other Board Director on each Committee. Committee membership must be approved by the Board. Board Directors and external individuals invited by the Board on to the Committee are members of the Committee and have the right to vote on the Committee, while members of staff are only in attendance, provide advice to the Committee and do not have the right to vote on any matter. Committee meetings follow the same meeting procedures set out for the Board in the Constitution, for example a quorum is 50% of membership.

At present the Board has four Standing Committees. They are Finance & Audit, Client Services, Research and Remuneration. From time to time the Board may also establish ad hoc committees to assist with specific issues or projects. Individual Committee charters are regularly reviewed by the Board. The terms of reference for each Standing Committee are set out in Aspect's Regulations which are available on Aspect's website. Standing Committee meetings and attendances by Directors are set out in Aspect's annual report.

REMUNERATION

No Directors receive remuneration from Aspect. Out of pocket expenses relating to their director activities may be reimbursed by Aspect. The Chief Executive Officer's remuneration is governed by a contract of employment.



Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)

(A company limited by guarantee)
ABN 12 000 637 267

Concise Financial Report for the year ended 31 December 2007



Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) (A company limited by guarantee) Directors' Report

The Directors present their report together with the financial report of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) for the year ended 31 December 2007 and the auditors' report thereon.

Directors

The Directors of Aspect in office at any time during, or since, the year ended 31 December 2007 are:

Peter Werner, [Board Chair] B.Comm. is an executive search consultant and a Director of Richfield Consulting. He has worked in the banking industry. He is the father of three children, one of whom has an autism spectrum disorder. Peter joined the Board in 2001. He is a member of the Finance & Audit Committee and chairs the Remuneration Committee. Peter is a Member-elected Director.

Robert Pesavento, [Deputy Chair] is the General Manager, Customer Engineering with SingTel Optus Pty Limited. Robert is the father of a son with an autism spectrum disorder. Robert joined the Board in 1999 and chairs the Client Services Committee. Robert is a Member-elected Director.

Weston Ryan, [Treasurer] B.Bus, F.C.A. is a partner in the accounting firm, Einfeld Symonds Vince where he advises on Australian and international tax issues. Weston's interests include professional education. He teaches in Australia, Singapore and Malaysia. His interest in Aspect developed from friends with children who have an autism spectrum disorder. Weston joined the Board in 2003, became the Treasurer and chairs the Finance & Audit Committee. Weston is a Member-elected Director.

David Down, B.E. (Chem) Hons is in a senior management role with the rail company, Pacific National and is a chemical engineer by profession. He is the father of two children, one of whom has an autism spectrum disorder. David joined the Board in July 2007 as a Board-appointed Director:

David Epper, A.N.Z.I.I.P. (Senior Assoc.) is the Managing Director of Accident and Health International Underwriting Pty Limited. He joined the Board in 2001. He has a son with an autism spectrum disorder. David is a Member-elected Director.

Adelle Evans, B.Bus, F.C.A. is the Risk Manager at the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia. She also manages the Thought Leadership Project at the Institute and previously worked as the organisation's Assistant Director, Education. Adelle has a sister with an autism spectrum disorder. She joined the Board in September 2006 as a Board-appointed Director and resigned in May 2007.

David Foster, B.E., F.I.E. (Aust), is a retired engineer with management experience with Pacific Power. As the parent of an adult son with an autism spectrum disorder, he is interested in progressive development of plans for growing numbers of adults who have autism spectrum disorders. David joined the Board in 1975 and is a member of the Finance & Audit Committee. He also represents the Board on the Corporate Risk Management Committee. David is a Life Governor of Aspect and is a Member-elected Director.

Geraldine Gray, M.Ed., B.A. is the State Coordinator, Special Learning Needs for the NSW Catholic Education Commission. She joined the Board in 2004. Gerry has been supporting students with special educational needs since 1980, having begun her teaching career in the mid 70's. Gerry joined the Board in 2004 and is a member of the Client Services Committee. Gerry is a Member-elected Director.

Jonathan Harris, LLB; Accredited Specialist in Business Law is a solicitor and Managing Partner of Harris Hyde Page. As the parent of a son with an autism spectrum disorder, he is interested in assisting parents with their wills and other estate planning issues for family members with a disability. Jonathan joined the Board in 1996 and is a Member-elected Director.



Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) (A company limited by guarantee) Directors' Report

Directors (continued)

Malcolm McEwen, B.Bus., M.Bus., is an executive search and selection consultant with Carmichael Fisher. He joined the Board in 2004. Malcolm is married with two children, one of whom has an autism spectrum disorder. He is a member of the Finance & Audit Committee, the Remuneration Committee and the Research Committee. Malcolm is a Member-elected Director.

Keith Perkin, B.Bus, C.P.A, is the Head of Business Operations at the Starlight Children's Foundation. Keith has an extensive commercial background primarily in the fields of management and marketing, having held senior positions in Compaq, Dymocks, BP and Retravision. Keith joined the Board in 2004. He is a member of the Remuneration Committee. Keith is a Member-elected Director.

Dr David Starte, M.B.B.S., M.R.C.P. (UK), F.R.A.C.P. is the Service Director at the Chatswood Assessment Centre and a Clinical Associate Lecturer in the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health, School of Medicine, University of Sydney. He joined the Board in 2004 and his interests include developmental paediatrics, including autism spectrum disorders, ADHD, and audiology including universal newborn screening and auditory processing. David chairs the Research Committee and is a Member-elected Director.

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

Directors' meetings

	Directors' Meetings		Finance & Audit Committee		Client Services Committee		Research Committee		Remuneration Committee	
	No. of	No. of	No. of	No. of	No. of	No. of	No. of	No. of	No. of	No. of
	Meetings	Meetings	Meetings	Meetings	Meetings	Meetings	Meetings	Meetings	Meetings	Meetings
	attended	held	attended	held	attended	held	attended	held	attended	held
Mr PWerner	7	8	5	10	-	-	-	-	I	I
Mr R Pesavento	5	8	-	-	3	3	-	-	-	-
Mr W Ryan	4	8	9	10	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mr D Down	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mr D Epper	6	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mrs A Evans	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mr D Foster	8	8	10	10	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ms G Gray	4	8	-	-	2	3	-	-	-	-
Mr J Harris	7	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mr M McEwen	6	8	10	10	-	-	I	2	I	I
Mr K Perkin	8	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	I	ı
Dr D Starte	8	8	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	-

The number of directors' and committee meetings held during the time the director held office during the year.



Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) (A company limited by guarantee) Directors' Report (continued)

Company secretary

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

Name & Qualifications Appointment date:

Mr Adrian Ford (Fellow Aust. Inst. Co. Directors) 2000

Principal activities

The principal activities of Autism Spectrum Australia are to provide a range of services to children, young people and adults with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). These include information services, diagnostic and assessment services, early intervention for young children and schools and educational outreach services for children and young people. Autism Spectrum Australia provides employment programs, community participation programs and accommodation services for adults with an ASD while it provides behaviour support programs for people with an ASD of all ages. A range of support services are provided to families of people with an ASD. The provision of training and consultation to other professionals and parents in ways of working with people with an ASD also continues as does Autism Spectrum Australia's research program. There were no significant changes in the nature of its activities during the year.

Financial result

The operating result for 2007 was a surplus of \$1,130,427 (2006: surplus \$468,404).

Dividends

Autism Spectrum Australia has no share capital, as it is a company limited by guarantee. This means it is precluded from paying a dividend to its members.

Review of operations

The community's awareness of people with an autism spectrum disorder continues to rise. In response Autism Spectrum Australia continues to extend its services to try and meet this ever growing need.

Government grants continued to provide the major operational income for Autism Spectrum Australia supported by fundraising and a contribution by clients' families for some of the services through a fee for service charge. Income from these three sources increased in 2007 to \$24,001,599 compared with \$21,401,022 in 2006.

State of affairs

In the opinion of the directors, there were no significant changes in the state of affairs of Autism Spectrum Australia that occurred during the financial year under review not otherwise disclosed in the report or the financial statements.

Environmental regulation

Autism Spectrum Australia is not subject to any significant environmental regulation under either commonwealth or state legislation. However, the Board believes that Autism Spectrum Australia has adequate systems in place for the management of its environmental requirements and is not aware of any breach of those environmental requirements as they apply to Aspect.

Events subsequent to balance date

There has not arisen in the interval between the end of the financial year and the date of this report any item, transaction or event of a material and unusual nature likely, in the opinion of the directors of Autism Spectrum Australia, to affect significantly the operations of Autism Spectrum Australia, the results of the operations, or the state of affairs of Autism Spectrum Australia, in subsequent financial years.



Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) (A company limited by guarantee) Directors' Report (continued)

Likely developments

No significant change to the nature of the principal activities of Autism Spectrum Australia is expected.

Indemnification and insurance of officers

During the year Autism Spectrum Australia took out an insurance policy to indemnify the directors and officers against all liabilities that may arise from their position as directors and officers of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect).

The insurance premiums relate to the costs and expenses incurred by the relevant officers in defending proceedings, whether civil or criminal and whatever their outcome and other liabilities that may arise from their position, with

the exception of conduct involving a wilful breach of duty or improper use of information or position to gain a personal advantage.

Since the end of the previous year, Autism Spectrum Australia has paid insurance premiums of \$3,185 (2006: \$20,150) in respect of all Directors' and Officers' Liability and Legal Expenses insurance contracts. The insurance contracts do not identify premiums paid in respect of the individual directors.

Court proceedings

No person has applied for leave of court to bring proceedings on behalf of the company or intervened in any proceedings to which the company is a party for the purpose of taking responsibility on behalf of the company for all or any part of those proceedings.

The company was not a party to any such proceedings during the year.

Auditor's Independence Declaration

A copy of the auditor's independence declaration as required under section 307C of the Corporation Act 2001 is set out on page 28.

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

P. Werner - Board Chair

Dated this 17711 day of April 2008 at Sydney.





Grant Thornton NSW ABN 25 034 787 757

Level 17, 383 Kent Street Sydney NSW 2000 PO Locked Bag Q800 QVB Post Office Sydney NSW 1230

T +61 2 8297 2400 F +61 2 9299 4445 E info@gtnsw.com.au W www.grantthornton.com.au

AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION TO THE DIRECTORS OF AUTISM SPECTRUM AUSTRALIA (ASPECT)

In accordance with the requirements of section 307C of the *Corporations Act 2001*, as lead auditor for the audit of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) for the year ended 31 December 2007, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

- (a) No contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of the Corporations Act 2001 in relation to the audit; and
- (b) No contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Gast Thomas NSW

GRANT THORNTON NSW Chartered Accountants

A G RIGELE

Partner

Sydney, 17 April 2008

Grant Thorston is a trademark owned by Grant Thorston International Ltd (AV) and used under Somes by independent firms and entities throughout the world. Grant Thorston inventor firms in Australia are businesses trading independently under the name Grant Thorston. Grant Thorston Australia Ltd has been incorporated to conduct those businesses as a single national entity, and quitic refification will be given upon commencement. Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards legislation.



Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) (A company limited by guarantee) Income Statement For the year ended 31 December 2007

	Note	2007 \$	2006 \$
Revenue from employment enclaves		122,724	115,989
Revenue from rendering of services		2,654,147	2,194,833
Federal/State grants and salary subsidies		21,129,066	18,932,938
Other revenue		2,334,673	2,101,350
Total revenue	5	26,240,610	23,345,110
Employee expenses		(20,929,508)	(18,993,844)
Transportation costs		(947,768)	(882,585)
Insurance expense		(320,198)	(457,055)
Depreciation and amortisation expenses		(291,983)	(289,894)
Finance costs		(20,112)	(22,605)
Other expenses from ordinary activities		(2,600,614)	(2,230,723)
Operating surplus from ordinary activities		1,130,427	468,404
Net result of operations		1,130,427	468,404



Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) (A company limited by guarantee) Balance Sheet As at 31 December 2007

	2007 \$	2006 \$
Current assets	*	7
Cash and cash equivalents	663,552	601,439
Trade and other receivables	208,122	287,235
Other financial assets	3,503,250	1,501,538
Other assets	3,505,250	325,524
Other assets		323,327
Total current assets	4,762,674	2,715,736
Non-current assets		
Property, plant and equipment	3,654,184	3,226,620
Other financial assets	5,695,765	4,310,216
Total non-current assets	9,349,949	7,536,836
Total assets	14,112,623	10,252,572
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	3,900,633	1,231,506
Short term borrowings	34,392	31,737
Short term provisions	1,613,549	1,442,958
oner term provisions		1,112,730
Total current liabilities	5,548,574	2,706,201
Non-current liabilities		
Long term borrowings	197,746	232,113
Long term provisions	1,266,755	1,076,231
Total non-current liabilities	1,464,501	1,308,344
Total liabilities	7,013,075	4,014,545
Net assets	7,099,548	6,238,027
Equity		
Reserves	448,838	717,744
Accumulated surplus	6,650,710	5,520,283
Total equity	7,099,548	6,238,027



Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) (A company limited by guarantee) Cash Flow Statement For the year ended 31 December 2007

	2007	2006
	\$	\$
Cash flows from operating activities		
Receipts from customers and grants	27,590,283	22,358,989
Payments to suppliers and employees	(23,852,720)	(22,350,225)
Interest received	284.906	218,459
Dividend received	545,089	272,289
Interest paid	(48,868)	(22,606)
Net cash provided by operating activities	4,518,690	476,906
, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,		
Cash flows from investing activities		
Proceeds on disposal of investments	478,732	_
Payments for investments	(2,079,456)	(304,451)
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(822,430)	(364,186)
Net cash used in investing activities	(2,423,154)	(668,637)
Cash flows from financing activities		
Repayment of borrowings	(31,711)	(29,262)
Net cash provided by financing activities	(31,711)	(29,262)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents held	2,063,825	(220,993)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	2,102,977	2,323,970
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	4,166,802	2,102,977
	.,,	_,,



Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) (A company limited by guarantee) Statement of Changes in Equity For the year ended 31 December 2007

	Asset	Accumulated	Total
	revaluation	Surplus	
	reserve		
Balance at 1 January 2006	675,407	5,051,879	5,727,286
Available for sale securities gains recognised in equity	348,579	-	348,579
Transfer from asset revaluation reserve on			
available for sale securities realised during the year	(306,242)	-	(306,242)
Net income recognised directly in equity	42,337	-	42,337
Surplus for the year	_	468,404	468,404
Total recognised income and expense for the period	42,337	468,404	510,741
Balance at 31 December 2006	717,744	5,520,283	6,238,027
Available for sale securities (losses) recognised			
in equity	(215,174)	-	(215,174)
Transfer from asset revaluation reserve on available for			
sale securities realised during the year	(53,732)	-	(53,732)
Net (deficit) recognised directly in equity	(268,906)	-	(268,906)
Surplus for the year		1,130,427	1,130,427
Total recognised income and expense for the period	(268,906)	1,130,427	861,521
Balance at 31 December 2007	448,838	6,650,710	7,099,548



Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)
(A company limited by guarantee)
Discussion and Analysis
For the year ended 31 December 2007

Discussion and Analysis of the Income Statement

Aspect's income for 2007 increased by 12% to \$26,240,610 (2006: \$23,345,110). This movement was mainly due to a 12% increase in government grants and subsidies during 2007 of \$2,196,128. This was the result of the continued growth of Aspect's schools program for children and young people with autism spectrum disorders. Fundraising, including bequests, generated a net result of \$870,660 (2006: \$665,547). Bequests to the Company totalled \$22,532 (2006: \$162,234).

Total expenses increased 10% during the year mainly as a result of a general increase in salaries (increase of \$2,012,262 to \$18,947,270), superannuation expenses (increase of \$112,577 to \$1,536,976) and consultants (increase of \$126,666 to \$339,058). The rise in costs was offset by substantial savings in insurances (decrease of \$136,857 to \$320,198).

The net effects of the increases in income and expenditure combined to produce an operating surplus of \$1,130,427 compared with a surplus of \$468,404 in 2006.

Discussion and Analysis of the Balance Sheet

The Company's net assets increased by 14% to \$7,099,548 during the year.

The Company's total assets increased by 38% by \$3,860,051 to \$14,112,623 (2006: \$10,252,572). The \$2m grant received in advance from the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care and the delayed expenditure on the capital works projects reflect an increase excess cash in current financial assets (tactical portfolio increase of \$2,001,712) and non-current financial assets (investment portfolio increase of \$1,385,549).

Total liabilities of the Company increased by \$2,998,530 to \$7,013,075 (2006: \$4,014,545). This is mainly due to the increase in payables of \$2,669,127 to \$3,900,633, which mainly relates to Government Subsidies paid in advance. In addition, employment provisions increased by \$361,115 to \$2,880,304 due to the reduction in staff turnover and general wage increases.

Discussion and Analysis of the Cash Flow Statement

The increase in cash of \$2,063,825 to \$4,166,802 was mainly due the increased government funding provided from operating activities of \$4,518,690 less the investment activity spending for the purchase of investments (\$2,079,456) and property & equipment (\$822,430).

The net result from financing activities was not significant.

Discussion and Analysis of Statement of Changes in Equity

Equity has increased due to the surplus from operations being retained.

Other reserves have decreased by \$268,906 during the year as a result of decline in market value of investments.



Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) (A company limited by guarantee) Notes to and forming part of the concise financial report For the year ended 31 December 2007 (continued)

Note I Basis of preparation of Concise Financial Report

The concise financial report has been prepared in accordance with the Accounting Standard AASB 1039 "Concise Financial Reports" and the Corporation's Act 2001.

All amounts are presented in Australian dollars

The financial statements and specific disclosures required by AASB 1039 have been derived from the Company's full financial report for the financial year. Other information included in the concise financial report is consistent with the Company's full financial report. The concise financial report does not, and cannot be expected to, provide as full an understanding of the financial performance, financial position and financing and investing activities of the Company as the full financial report.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical cost, except for the revaluation of certain non-current assets and financial instruments. Cost is based on the fair values of the consideration given in exchange for assets.

These accounting policies have been consistently applied by the Company and, except where there is a change in accounting policy, are consistent with those of the previous year.

A full description of the accounting policies adopted by the entity is provided in the 2007 financial statements which form part of the full financial report.

Where necessary, comparative information has been reclassified to achieve consistency in disclosure with the current financial year amounts and other disclosures.

Impairment of Assets

At each reporting date, the company reviews the carrying values of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use, is compared to the asset's carrying value. Any excess of the asset's carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the Income Statement.

Note 2 Full Financial Report

Further financial information can be obtained from the full financial report which is available, free of charge, on request from the Company's premises at 41 Cook St., Forestville or calling (02) 8977 8300 or email drenneberg@aspect.org.au.

Note 3 Events after Balance Sheet date

Since balance date, the investment portfolio has decreased in value from \$5,695,765 to \$5,250,066 (8%) as at 31 March 2008. This fall is reflective of the poor performance of the market since balance date. The directors are currently of the opinion that no change is required to the investment strategy as a result of this fall.

The financial report was authorised for issue on 16th April 2008 by the Board of Directors.



Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) (A company limited by guarantee) Notes to and forming part of the concise financial report For the year ended 31 December 2007 (continued)

Note 4 New Accounting Standards and Australian Accounting Interpretations

The disclosure requirements of AASB 114: Segment Reporting have been replaced by the issuing of AASB 8: Operating Segments in February 2007. AASB 8 was applicable for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2009, with early adoption permitted. The amendments involve changes to segment reporting disclosures within the financial report, however, there will be no direct impact on amounts included in the financial report as it is a disclosure standard and its application is required by disclosing entities. Aspect has therefore elected to early adopt AASB 8, and as the company is not a disclosing entity no segment reporting disclosures are required.

There have been new Australian Accounting Standards and Australian Accounting Interpretations issued or amended, which are applicable to the company, but are not yet effective. Other than as noted above, they have not been adopted in the preparation of the financial report, as it is believed these will have no material effect.

Note 5 Revenue from ordinary activities

Total revenue from ordinary activities	26,240,610	23,345,110
Other revenue	1,275,492	1,310,212
Employment enclaves	122,724	115,989
Members' subscriptions	10,800	27,139
School and residence fees	1,561,372	1,402,058
Interest	829,995	490,748
Fundraising projects	926,409	519,073
Donations and bequests	384,752	546,953
Federal/State grants and subsidies	21,129,066	8,932,938
	\$	\$
	2007	2006

Note 6 Dividends

No dividends were paid or proposed in the current or prior financial years.

Note 7 Remuneration of Directors

The directors of the Company receive no remuneration.



Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) (A company limited by guarantee) Notes to and forming part of the concise financial report For the year ended 31 December 2007 (continued)

Note 8 Results of fundraising appeals

	2007 \$	2006 \$
Gross proceeds from fundraising appeals	1,311,162	1,066,026
Less: Total costs of fundraising appeals	(440,502)	(400,479)
Net surplus obtained from fundraising appeals	870,660	665,547
Note 9 Application of the net surplus obtained from fundraising appeals		
(i) Net surplus from fundraising appeals (Note 8)	870,660	665,547
(ii) This was applied to the charitable purposes in contributing to payment of the following expenses:		
Expenditure on direct services	22,141,074	20,265,167
Expenditure on administration	2,528,607	2,197,851
	24,669,681	22,463,018
(iii) The shortfall of \$23,799,021 between the \$870,660 surplus available from fundraising appeals conducted and total expenditure of \$24,669,681 was provided from the following sources:		
Federal grants and subsidies	21,129,067	18,932,939
Membership, residence and school fees	2,505,147	2,066,448
Other income	1,295,234	1,266,488
-	24,929,448	22,265,875
Deduct: operating (surplus)	(1,130,427)	(468,404)
Shortfall provided from other sources	23,799,021	21,797,471

Directors' Declaration

The Directors of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) declare that the concise financial report of the Company for the financial year ended 31 December 2007, as set out on pages 29 to 36:

- (a) complies with Accounting Standard AASB 1039: Concise Financial Reports; and
- is an extract from the full financial report for the year ended 31 December 2007 and has been derived from and is consistent with the full financial report of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect).

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

P. Werner **Board Chair**

Dated this 17th day of April. 2008 at Sydney.



Grant Thornton NSW ABN 25 034 787 757

Level 17, 383 Kent Street Sydney NSW 2000 PO Locked Bag Q800 QVB Post Office Sydney NSW 1230

T +61 2 8297 2400 F +61 2 9299 4445 E info@gtnsw.com.au W www.grantthornton.com.au

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF AUTISM SPECTRUM AUSTRALIA (ASPECT)

We have audited the accompanying concise financial report of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) which comprises the balance sheet as at 31 December 2007, and the income statement, statement of changes in equity and cash flow statement for the year ended on that date, other related notes and the directors' declaration, derived from the audited financial report of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) for the year ended 31 December 2007. The concise financial report does not contain all the disclosures required by the Australian Accounting Standards.

Directors' responsibility for the concise financial report

The directors of the Company are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the concise financial report in accordance with Accounting Standard AASB 1039: Concise Financial Reports, and the Corporations Act 2001. This responsibility includes establishing and maintaining internal controls relevant to the preparation of the concise financial report; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the concise financial report based on our audit procedures. We have conducted and independent audit, in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, of the financial report of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) for the year ended 31 December 2007. Our audit report on the financial report for the year was signed on 17 April 2008 and was not subject to any modification. The Australian Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance as to whether the financial report for the year is free of material misstatement.

Our procedures in respect of the concise financial report included testing that the information in the concise financial report is derived from, and is consistent with, the financial report for the year, and examination on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts, discussion and analysis, and other disclosures which were not directly derived from the financial report for the year. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the concise financial report complies with Accounting Standard AASB 1039: Concise Financial Reports and whether the discussion and analysis complies with the requirements laid down in AASB 1039: Concise Financial Reports.

Grant Thornton is a trademark owned by Grant Thornton International Ltd (UK) and used under licence by independent times and entities throughout the world. Grant Thornton member firms in Australia are businesses trading independently under the name Grant Thornton. Grant Thornton Australia Ltd has been incorporated to conduct those businesses as a single national entity, and existing solid conduct those businesses as a single national entity, and existing solid conducts the proposal conductor of the conductor of





INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF AUTISM SPECTRUM AUSTRALIA (ASPECT) (cont)

Auditor's responsibility (cont)

but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the directors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

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

Independence

In conducting our audit, we complied with the independence requirements of the Corporations Act 2001.

Auditor's opinion

In our opinion:

- (a) The financial report of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) is in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001, including:
 - giving a true and fair view of the company's and consolidated entity's financial position as at 31 December 2007 and of their performance for the year ended on that date;
 - complying with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the Corporations Regulations 2001;
 - the financial report and associated records have been properly kept during the year in accordance with the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and the regulations;
 - iv. monies received as a result of fundraising appeals conducted during the year has been properly accounted for and applied in accordance with the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and its regulations; and
 - there are reasonable grounds to believe Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.
- (b) The financial report also complies with International Financial Reporting Standards as disclosed in Note 1.

Gout Thomas NSW

GRANT THORNTON NSW Chartered Accountants

A G RIGELE Partner

Sydney, 17 April 2008

Grant Thornton is a trademark owned by Grant Thornton International Ltd (JR) and used under licence by independent firms and entities throughout the world. Grant Thornton member firms in Australia are businesses trading endependently under the name Grant Thornton. Grant Thornton Australia Ltd has been economised to conduct those businesses as a single notional entity, and public notification will be given spon commencement. Liability infinited by a scheme applied under Professional Standards legislation.





Grant Thornton NSW ABN 25 034 787 757

Level 17, 383 Kent Street Sydney NSW 2000 PO Locked Bag Q800 QVB Post Office Sydney NSW 1230

T +61 2 8297 2400 F +61 2 9299 4445 E info@gtnsw.com.au W www.grantthomton.com.au

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF AUTISM SPECTRUM AUSTRALIA (ASPECT)

We have audited the accompanying concise financial report of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) which comprises the balance sheet as at 31 December 2007, and the income statement, statement of changes in equity and cash flow statement for the year ended on that date, other related notes and the directors' declaration, derived from the audited financial report of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) for the year ended 31 December 2007. The concise financial report does not contain all the disclosures required by the Australian Accounting Standards.

Directors' responsibility for the concise financial report

The directors of the Company are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the concise financial report in accordance with Accounting Standard AASB 1039: Concise Financial Reports, and the Corporations Act 2001. This responsibility includes establishing and maintaining internal controls relevant to the preparation of the concise financial report; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the concise financial report based on our audit procedures. We have conducted and independent audit, in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, of the financial report of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) for the year ended 31 December 2007. Our audit report on the financial report for the year was signed on 17 April 2008 and was not subject to any modification. The Australian Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance as to whether the financial report for the year is free of material misstatement.

Our procedures in respect of the concise financial report included testing that the information in the concise financial report is derived from, and is consistent with, the financial report for the year, and examination on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts, discussion and analysis, and other disclosures which were not directly derived from the financial report for the year. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the concise financial report complies with Accounting Standard AASB 1039: Concise Financial Reports and whether the discussion and analysis complies with the requirements laid down in AASB 1039: Concise Financial Reports.

Grant Thornton is a trademark owned by Grant Thornton International Ltd (UR) and used under licence by independent firms and entities throughout the world. Grant Thornton member firms in Australia Ltd has been incorporated to conduct those businesses as a single independent of the conduct those businesses as a single independent of the conduct those businesses as a single independent of the conduct those businesses as a single independent of the conduct those businesses as a single individual entity, and outlier individual entity in the purpose of the conduct those businesses as a single individual entity, and outlier individual entity in the purpose of the conduct the



Aspect increased the number of places on offer in schools to a total of 513 534 children received early intervention Autism Spectrum Australia turnover was $\$26^{.2}$ million Government funding increased by \$2.2^{million} 447,000 user sessions on the website were recorded 38%



- LIFE GOVERNORS
- Mr Ian Barnett
- Mr Jim Bryant
- Mr Rick Damelian
- Mr David Foster
- Mr Gerry Harvey
- Mrs Betty Hatch
- Mr L Rawstorne
- Mr Ray Seager
- Mrs Eleanor Spence
- Dr A Vern Barnett
- Mr A Whelan
- LIFE MEMBERS
- Mr Roger Allen
- Mr George Andrews
- Ms Julie Anthony
- Mr Mark Bowen
- Mrs Val Browne
- Mrs Geraldine Bryant
- Mr Arthur Byrne
- Mr J C Crow
- Professor Peter Dodd
- Mrs H Emanuel
- Mr Mark Fogarty
- Mr John Gerahty
- Mrs Patricia Gibbs
- Mr John Gibbs
- Mrs Marie Goodare
- Mrs N Graham-Taylor
- Mrs | Hall

- Dr Noel Hodge
- Lady Sybil Joel
- Ms Judith Johnson
- Mrs Olivia Keighley
- Mrs Joyce Kennedy
- Mrs Marion Kingston
- Mr Errol Larbalestier
- Dr P Mayne
- Mr Michael McColm
- Mrs Marjorie McDonald
- Mrs Jill McGrath
- Mr Tony McGrath
- Mrs Shirley McIntosh
- Mrs C Mount
- Mr Ron Mulock
- Mrs Claire O'Keefe
- Mr Ostilio Pisanu
- Dr Gretchen Poiner
- Dr A Polyblank
- Mr D Robbins
- Dr Jacqueline Roberts
- Mr Basil Sellers AM
- Mr John Shand
- Mrs Jean Slaughter
- Mr Paul C J Smith
- Mr David Stead
- Mrs Margaret Stead
- Mrs Margaret Vernon
- Mrs Eileen Ward

We were saddened by the death in May 2007 of Life Member Marie Hayward. Many will remember Marie for her tireless work as a volunteer aide at Autism Spectrum Australia's Vern Barnett School. Marie was generous, caring and a great supporter of our work and she will be missed.



