



a different brilliant[®]

understanding, engaging & celebrating the
strengths, interests & aspirations
of people on the spectrum



Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) acknowledges and pays respect to the traditional custodians of the many lands and cultures of the places in which we live and work.

In preparing the annual report for the year ending December 2017, we have reduced our impact on the environment by retaining it on our website and producing only a limited number of copies in print.

Aspect is a company limited by guarantee, duly registered under the Corporations Act 2001.

Aspect is a public benevolent institution with deductible gift recipient status (DGR6966) as endorsed by the Australian Taxation Office.

In addition, Aspect holds NSW Charitable Fundraising Authority Number 10991, ACT Charitable Collection Authority Number 19000299, Victorian Fundraising Registration Number 10688, QLD Certificate of Registration as a Charity Number CH2466, WA Charitable Collections Licence CC21640 and SA Collections for Charitable Purposes Licence Number CCP2016. Aspect is also authorised to fundraise in Northern Territory and Tasmania.

Registered office: Building 1, Level 2
14 Aquatic Drive, Frenchs Forest NSW 2086

ABN: 12 000 637 267

Banker: Westpac Banking Corporation

Solicitor: Kemp Strang of the Kennedy Strang Legal Group

Auditor: Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd

Investment Advisor: JB Were Pty Ltd

Website: autismspectrum.org.au

Email: customerservice@autismspectrum.org.au

Phone: (02) 8977 8300

Fax: (02) 8977 8399

Our Annual General Meeting will be held at the State Library of NSW, Sydney, Australia on 30 May 2018 at 2.30 pm.

Cover image: Aspect Vern Barnett student, Ellis



Inside the report

Our Purpose & Our Work.....	4
Our Patron, Life Governors & Life Members.....	6
Aspect at a Glance.....	8
Message from the Chair.....	10
Message from the CEO.....	12
Aspect Comprehensive Approach.....	14
Vassilios & Lola - Aspect Comprehensive Approach.....	16

Treasurer's Report.....	18
Anthony - Aspect Capable Job Seeker.....	22
Strategic Plan 2018 - 2020.....	24
Respite House - Werribee, Victoria.....	26
Aspect's Fundraising & Our Supporters.....	28
Our People.....	30
Directors' Report & Financial Report.....	32

Photo credit: David Thompson Photography

Our Purpose

a different brilliant®

Understanding, engaging and celebrating the strengths, interests and aspirations of people on the autism spectrum

Our Vision

The best opportunities for people on the autism spectrum

Our Mission

We work with people of all ages on the autism spectrum, delivering evidence-informed solutions that are person-centred, family-focused & customer-driven

Our Values

We are passionate about people, about being positive and about what's possible





Our Work

We focus on the **strengths, interests and aspirations** of people on the spectrum

We work in **partnership** with people on the spectrum, their families and their communities

We work to **understand** people on the spectrum from their perspective

Our approach is **autism-specific**

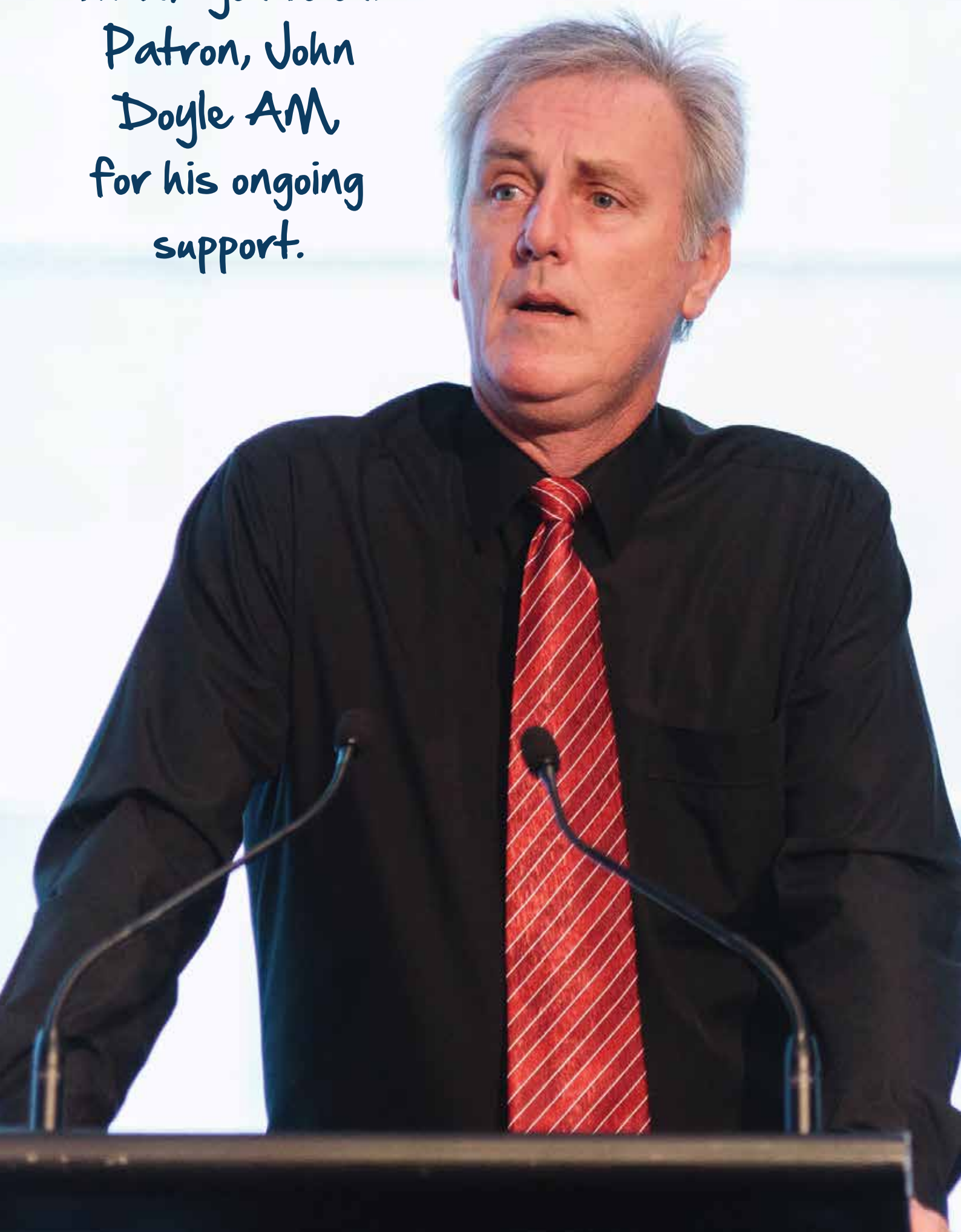
Our **research** focuses on **best practice**

We expect **positive change and progress**

Together we can achieve **positive outcomes**



Thank you to our
Patron, John
Doyle AM
for his ongoing
support.



Our Patron, Life Governors & Life Members

Our Patron

John Doyle AM is an award-winning Australian actor, writer, radio presenter and comedian. He has continued to support Aspect in raising awareness and much needed funds to help people on the autism spectrum and their families. John has a sister on the spectrum, and brings his warmth and personal connection to everything he does for Aspect.

Life Governors

Ian Barnett	Betty Hatch
Rick Damelian	Larry A Rawstorne
John Doyle AM	Peter Werner
David Epper OAM	A G Whelan
David Foster	
Hilton Grugeon AM	
Gerry Harvey	

Life Members

Roger Q Allen OAM	Jill McGrath	Aspect Life Member Mrs Patricia Gibbs sadly passed away during 2017. We remember her for her unwavering commitment to supporting people on the autism spectrum and their families.
Clasina Andrews	Tony McGrath AM	
Julie Anthony AM OBE	Shirley McIntosh	
Mark Bowen	Cath Mount	
Judy Brewer AO	Claire O'Keefe	
Geraldine Bryant	Richard Owens AM	
John Crow	Keith Perkin	
Barbara Cummins	Robert Pesavento	
Peter Dodd	Kathleen Pigram	
Peter Drayton	Ostilio Pisanu	
H Emanuel	Gretchen Poiner	
Tim Fischer AC	A H Polyblank	
Mark Fogarty	Jacqueline Roberts	
John Gerahty	Weston Ryan	
Marie Goodare	Basil Sellers AM	
Sybil Joel	John Shand	
Judith A Johnson	Jean Slaughter	
Errol Larbalestier	Paul C J Smith	
P Mayne	David Starte	
Malcolm McEwen	Margaret Stead	
Michael McColm	Andrea Werner	

Aspect at a glance



**\$4.25
million**

Total Comprehensive
Income



1,300

delegates at the
Australia Pacific Autism
Conference 2017

17,654
enquiries received



1

international
alliance with Autism
Initiatives in the UK



3,372

participants had
individualised
funding packages,
including NDIS



9

autism-specific
schools

1,223

Aspect employees



56

people on the
spectrum employed
in award wage jobs



**NOW
HIRING**



\$92.67
million
annual turnover

1,111
Aspect School
students



163
children attended
new Respite service
in West Melbourne



7,719
children & adults
supported across
NSW, Victoria,
Queensland, South
Australia & the ACT



The average length
of service for
Aspect staff is

5.7
years



72
autism-friendly
events held



Aspect
operates in
4
states & territories



2.7%
Aspect staff identify
as being on the
spectrum



Message from the Chair

It is with great pleasure that I present Autism Spectrum Australia's (Aspect) 2017 Annual Report.

Following our 50th anniversary year, 2017 saw us look to the future, celebrate new ways of working with people on the autism spectrum, and further clarify our purpose and mission as a leading service provider.

In 2017 the Core Strategies that drove Aspect's Business Plan were:

- be person-centred, family-focused and customer-driven;
- be the national autism-specific service provider and knowledge leader for autism, and
- continue to build capacity and reach,

and these strategies were summed up by three words: *people*, that is, the people we support which was the focus of our first strategy; *quality*, the focus of the second, and *reach*, the focus of the third.

This clarity underpinned an evolving discussion about Aspect's Purpose - the inherent reason why Aspect exists - which was finalised in early 2018. For some years Aspect has been using the phrase *a different brilliant* to describe its understanding of autism today through a strengths-based lens. It has become our inspiration but we wanted more than this; we want to embed *a different brilliant* into the very reason for our existence. We achieved this with our newly agreed Purpose: *a different brilliant* - understanding, engaging and celebrating the strengths, interests and aspirations of people on the autism spectrum. This will provide further impetus for Aspect as we continue to grow and develop in coming years focused, as we are on outcomes for people on the spectrum.

Aspect also revised its Mission statement in 2017 to emphasise the centrality of our partnership with people on the spectrum when working with them. It now reads: *We work in partnership with people of all ages on the autism spectrum delivering evidenced-informed solutions that are person-centred, family-focused & customer-driven.*

I want to congratulate the Management Network and all the staff for achieving eleven of the twelve Key Performance Indicators set by the Board for 2017. This was a major achievement, clearly demonstrating Management's focus on Aspect's Core Strategies across all parts of the organisation.

The Total Comprehensive Income for the year of \$4.25 million was an exceptional result for Aspect and continues a

consistent trend in recent years. It was mainly due to a strong operating surplus of \$2.70m, generated by both Aspect Education and NDIS Services & Strategic Partnering, and the income received from bequests totalling \$0.88m which was the second highest on record that Aspect had ever received. I am very appreciative of these supporters who have made these lasting gifts to Aspect which will be managed carefully to further build Aspect's long term future.

One of the most important steps taken by Aspect in 2017 was the decision to form the Aspect Advisory Council. This new Council comprises seven people on the autism spectrum who advise the Board and Executive on Aspect's strategy and operations. Facilitated by one of the Council members and supported by two Aspect national managers and CEO, Adrian Ford, the Council represents one of the most significant reforms ever in Aspect's governance framework and certainly the most notable change since its major constitutional review in 2005 when it became Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect). The Council is also a clear indicator of Aspect's strategic thinking, as we look to strengthen and include the voices of people on the spectrum in all our processes and programs.

The major event in 2017 was Aspect hosting the 5th Asia-Pacific Autism Conference (APAC 17) at the International Convention Centre in Darling Harbour, Sydney from 7 - 9 September. The conference theme was "Growing with Autism", representing the shift in autism research and practice of looking beyond the early childhood and school years, to a whole-of-life approach for people on the spectrum.

Aspect was responsible for organising and leading the three day international conference, which was keenly attended by over 1300 people from around the world and saw 280 presentations from delegates, with 22 keynote speakers and included 45 presentations by people on the autism spectrum. The hosting of the APAC conference not only further strengthened Aspect's role as a global thought leader in autism, but also reinforced the validity of our strengths-based person-centred approach. I would like to thank the APAC Organising Committee for their work in delivering this truly memorable and important event chaired by Adrian Ford with Lara Cheney as Deputy Chair and Dr Trevor Clark, Chair of the Scientific Program Committee.

Aspect moved to further develop its international relations in 2017 and late in the year agreed to formalise a significant international alliance with Autism Initiatives in the UK. Both

organisations are national service providers and have been working together since 2014 but this decision formalises those arrangements to enable the sharing of specific knowledge and experience, and to further strengthen each other's capabilities.

I want to thank my fellow Office Bearers, the Committee Chairs and the Members of the Board for their continued thoughtful and passionate commitment to Aspect and its governance. I also want to acknowledge Karyn Sobels who stepped down from the Board in 2017 after two years of service, Ian Joseph who is stepping down from the Board at this AGM after seven years of service and Paul Stevenson who joined the Board last year to fill a casual Board vacancy but has had to step down because of professional commitments.

Also my sincere thanks to the Executive team at Aspect, led by Adrian Ford, whose commitment and dedication to this organisation is driving Aspect's vision to provide the best opportunities for people on the spectrum; and to the staff, whose focus on understanding, engaging and celebrating the strengths, interests and aspirations of people on the spectrum is unwavering.



Julie Hamblin
Chair of the Aspect Board



Message from the Chief Executive Officer

In 2017 Aspect agreed on and began the implementation of its new Aspect Comprehensive Approach which is transforming the way we understand and engage with people on the autism spectrum. This innovative approach places the Five Point Star, developed by Autism Initiatives in the UK and licenced to Aspect, at the centre of our approach to autism practice and combines the eight elements to successful outcomes, which Aspect has researched over the last fifteen years.

The Aspect Comprehensive Approach is now being rolled out and embedded in every facet of Aspect's work with people on the spectrum, providing a common language across Aspect for the first time - whether one is having early intervention as a young child, attending one of Aspect's schools or receiving an NDIS package as an adult on the spectrum in the community.

The Five Point Star, which is part of the new Aspect Comprehensive Approach, is an autism-specific person-centred approach focusing on understanding, engaging and celebrating the strengths, interests and aspirations of each person on the autism spectrum across five areas - thinking, communication, expectation, motivation and sensory.

Implementing this model across Aspect is now a key priority. Our aim is to support everyone at Aspect - no matter where they work - to embrace the principles of the Aspect Comprehensive Approach in all their interactions with people on the autism spectrum.

People on the spectrum remain at the centre of everything that Aspect strives for, with demand for our services continuing to grow in 2017. This was evidenced by:

- our services expanding to more than 7,700 participants, 400 more than in 2016;
- our customer service team receiving a total of 17,654 enquires, 4,000 more than in 2016;
- over 7,670 workshop participants, 2,500 more than in 2016;
- more than 1,100 places for students in our nine schools, nearly 40 more than in 2016; and
- our work with 3,372 people using individualised funding packages, nearly 800 more than 2016 and demonstrating the marked shift away from state-funded disability services to packages funded through the NDIS.

But perhaps the more important evidence of our success was that even during a year of significant growth and change, both in Aspect and in the sector more broadly with the roll out of the NDIS, we still achieved a very impressive 80% for our Net Promoter Score, Aspect's measure of our customers' experience and satisfaction over the previous 12 months, meaning that four out of five people rated Aspect's service as a nine or ten out of ten.

In April 2017, our flagship fundraising event, *Walk for autism*, now in its second year of operation, saw more than 2740 participants walk, run or take on a challenge across Australia, raising over \$730,000. *Walk for autism* was also named a state finalist in the Fundraising Institute of Australia's (FIA) Special Events (under \$5m) category in their 2018 Awards for Excellence in Fundraising.

All up in 2017 Aspect received \$4,985,000 from its many supporters which was deeply appreciated. This money allowed Aspect to continue to develop its innovative approach to supporting people on the autism spectrum and their families in areas where there is insufficient or no funding from government.

In 2017, Aspect conducted its 8th biennial staff engagement survey, conducted by Voice Project. The survey results showed that Aspect continued to enjoy a high level of staff Passion/Engagement (84%), with the score increasing by 1% since the last survey. Our score for Progress also remained high (83%). We again achieved a "green" for both Passion/Engagement and Progress. I would like to thank all our Aspect staff for their continued dedication and commitment to their work with people on the autism spectrum.

In January 2017 Aspect open its first respite services hub in Werribee, which is in western Melbourne and throughout the year welcomed over 150 people, mainly between the ages of between the ages of 15 - 25 to the service. As a point of difference, the service offers more than a bricks and mortar respite solution by providing a suite of activities that reflect the strengths and interests of participants. Whilst the service model places greater emphasis on the individual, the service continues to deliver a respite outcome for families and carers. We believe this model will evolve to become an area for growth in Aspect's NDIS service provision, building on Aspect's already very strong commitment to therapy services and a range of services to adults.

Aspect's nine schools in NSW and South Australia continue to offer their comprehensive approach to more than 1100 students on the spectrum, making it one of the largest autism-specific educational systems in the world.

The Coffs Harbour Campus of the Aspect Macarthur School moved to its permanent site in Coffs Harbour in July 2017. Aspect was supported in this venture by funding from Sargent's Pies and cooperation from the local council. This permanent site marked a ten year campaign by local residents to have a school for children on the spectrum on the Mid North Coast of NSW. The need was identified through an Aspect led community consultation process in 2006.

Aspect further developed its work around autism-friendly communities. Aspect and Coles Supermarkets successfully launched the Quiet Hour campaign late in the year with a low-sensory shopping experience rolled out across 68 supermarkets nationally. Aspect also successfully secured a \$438,000 grant from the NDIS to develop 14 autism-friendly beaches in NSW and Queensland over the summer of 2017 - 2018.

Finally, my sincere thanks to Julie Hamblin and the Aspect Board, in guiding our vision and strategy, and their continued thoughtful leadership and governance of Aspect.

I also want to acknowledge the dedication and commitment of the Aspect staff, whose energy and enthusiasm for the work they do is evident in the amazing results we recorded last year, along with my particular thanks to the Aspect Executive who carry so readily both the opportunity and responsibility to lead Aspect day by day.

As we head into 2018, I feel extremely proud of where we have come from and very confident in where we are going. Our people, our passion and our practice provide the platforms for further progress and will enable us to grow and evolve to work in partnership with people on the spectrum and their families for many years to come.



Adrian Ford
Chief Executive Officer



Aspect Comprehensive Approach

In 2017 Aspect agreed to the new Aspect Comprehensive Approach, a consistent standard of practice that can be applied across all of Aspect's business units and a significant shift in the way Aspect as a whole understands and engages with people on the spectrum.

Evidence-informed, consistent and of the highest quality, the Aspect Comprehensive Approach model is based on decades of practice that systematically incorporates the latest research in the field of autism and has been developed to ensure that it continues to evolve to meet the needs of people on the spectrum.

Drawing on elements from our longstanding approach in Aspect Education and combining Autism Initiatives (UK)'s Five Point Star, the Aspect Comprehensive Approach provides important guidelines for our staff to build positive interactions between themselves and the people Aspect supports by delivering an autism-specific, person-centred approach to their practice.

The Aspect Comprehensive Approach uses the Autism Initiatives' (UK) Five Point Star: **Thinking; Communication; Expectations; Motivation and Sensory**, and consists of eight elements of autism practice identified by Aspect through its research, namely; **Individualised Planning; Learning & Participation; Structured Supports; Positive Behaviour Support; Health and Wellbeing; Specialist Collaboration; Transition & Inclusion and Family & Community Engagement**, to understand the strengths, interests and aspirations of a person on the autism spectrum.



Key staff from across all services in Aspect are involved in the development of practice for the Aspect Comprehensive Approach, ensuring that each step is appropriate for each life stage. Aspect is also progressing the development of an induction program for new staff and an ongoing professional learning tool for the Aspect Comprehensive Approach and Five Point Star.

Along with providing our staff with an invaluable tool for interacting with people on the autism spectrum, the the Aspect Comprehensive Approach is also in keeping with Aspect's Purpose - ***a different brilliant - understanding, engaging and celebrating the strengths, interests and aspirations of people on the autism spectrum.***

Implementing this model across Aspect will continue to be an important priority action in 2018 so that everyone in Aspect - no matter where they work - has unique insight into working with individuals on the spectrum.



*Based on Autism Initiatives (UK) Five Point Star

Vassilios & Lola

Aspect Comprehensive Approach

Vassilios and Lola are like most regular 8 year old twins. They look out for each other, play together, share jokes and love one another. They also know how to push each other's buttons.

First diagnosed with autism at three years of age, both children have been attending Aspect's Kirrawe class in South East Sydney since 2015, where the focus has been on identifying their strengths and interests using the Aspect Comprehensive Approach, to individualise their learning and develop their skills.

Lola has proved to be an extremely enthusiastic student who is enjoying all aspects of her schooling. Incredibly imaginative and creative, her favourite things to do include scripting stories in her head and singing.

Vassilios, on the other hand, is athletic and energetic. He loves riding his scooter and kicking a soccer ball. He is also a big reader, teaching himself to read by the early age of four years and currently reading at around a Year 10 level.

Using the individual interests of each of the twins in the classroom for motivation, both Vassilios and Lola are developing new skills every day, which is helping to build their confidence and improve their communication.

Vassilios and Lola's mother, Anastasia, says the twin's independence and

knowledge has grown overtime and that being in a nurturing and caring environment focusing on their individual strengths has helped with their self-esteem.

"Our children have developed verbally, socially and academically since starting at Aspect and whilst at the time, it seemed like only baby steps, when I look back I can see there has been a significant change in their behaviour."

Based on the latest thinking and knowledge of autism from researchers and therapists around the world, our Aspect Comprehensive Approach puts the individual on the spectrum at the centre of our teaching practices and uses the strengths and interest of that individual to help them learn.

"The children have been taught in a manner that suits them, in a class with only six other children, a teacher and a teacher's aide. The children have received an individualised program which has been targeted at developing them on multiple levels."

"We all have things that we are great at and not so good at. If you're on the spectrum it doesn't mean your weaknesses are who you are - we need to look at each individual's strengths and make the most of that."

"Aspect has done just that and provided us essential tools and therapies that have made our journey a million times easier."



"...we need to look
at each individual's
strengths & make
the most of that."

Photo credit: David Thompson Photography

Treasurer's report

Overview

The Total Comprehensive Income for the year of \$4.25m was an exceptional result for Aspect and continues a consistent trend in recent years of strong annual results. It was mainly due to the combination of operating surplus for the period of \$2.70m, the income received from bequests \$0.88m, capital donation \$0.12m, the profit from sale of the Altona property \$0.25m and the movements from Aspect's investment portfolios \$0.30m.

Aspect continued to extend its footprint in 2017, highlighted by the commencement of Aspect's respite centre in Werribee, Victoria and the Coffs Harbour campus of the Aspect Macarthur School in New South Wales. Additionally, there was significant investment in Aspect's Enterprise Resource Planning system to enhance our ability to respond to the needs of our participants in a more timely and efficient manner as part of Aspect's commitment to quality and efficiency under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

During 2017, Aspect further developed its service offerings. We increased the total number of students in our schools by 38 to 1,102 registered students in 2017 (2016: 1,064). Of this, Aspect Treetop School in Adelaide doubled its number to 45 students. Aspect NDIS Services also continued its ascending trajectory with 3,372 people using individualised funding packages, an increase of 782 participants compared to 2016. As part of our review of our Victoria services, a decision was made to dispose of the property in Altona contributing \$0.25m in net surplus. The proceeds from the sale will be reinvested back into Victoria as and when opportunity arises.

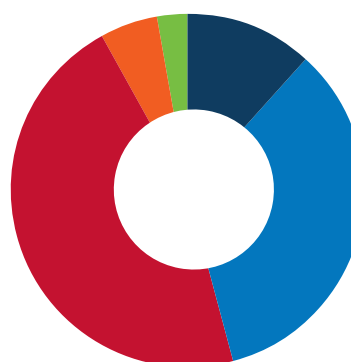
Under a challenging funding environment, an increasingly competitive market with the continued roll out of the NDIS nationally and changes in education funding for schools, the strong result reflects the operating efficiency of our services and the continued tight management of our resources. This surplus provides us with some of the necessary funds to allow Aspect to invest in areas such as:

1. The offering of new and additional services that are not government funded or not fully funded;
2. Continue to enhance our Enterprise Resource Planning system aiming to further deliver superior customer service and enhance efficiency across the whole organisation; and
3. Invest in capital projects in our schools to allow Aspect to meet the changing educational environment.

Income

Total income for 2017 was \$93.92m (Graph 1), an increase of 12.94% or \$10.76m from 2016. Government funding continued to be the major source of income for Aspect representing 80% percent of total income, which is consistent with 2016.

Graph 1:
Source of funds



- Fee for Service \$11.17m
- Federal Govt \$32.01m
- State Govt \$43.24m
- Fundraising \$4.98m
- Other \$2.52m

Government grants income increased by \$6.21m to \$75.24m (Graph 2) which reflected a higher level of government subsidies due to the increase in student numbers and an increase in NDIS participants. However

Graph 2:
Source of Government funding



- NSW Department of Education \$31.46m
- Commonwealth Department of Education & Training \$15.57m
- NSW Department of Family & Community Services \$6.89m
- Commonwealth Department of Social Services \$8.18m
- VIC Department of Health & Human Services \$4.90m
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) \$8.25m

grant income from the Catholic Education Office has reduced by (\$0.23m) in areas such as funding for teacher aides at Aspect satellite classes. This is a trend that is likely to continue in the coming years.

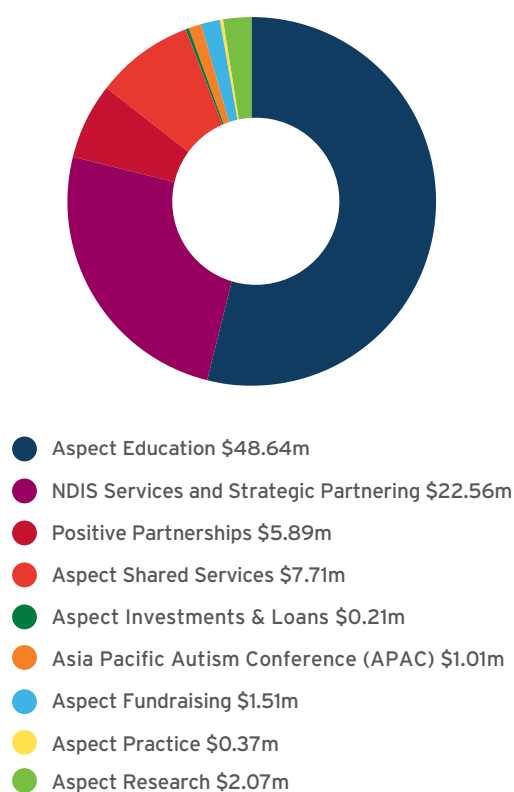
Total fees for services provided was \$11.17m (\$8.81m in 2016) which accounted for 11.89% (10.6% in 2016) of total income, which reflects a continued growth in services offered.

Gross fundraising income for 2017 was \$4.98m compared to \$3.85m in 2016 due to a larger number of supporters and bequest income of \$0.88m. We very much appreciate the continuing support from donors during the year.

Expenses

Total expenses for 2017 increased by 9.1% over prior year to \$89.97m in 2017 (Graph 3). Each business unit manager was responsible for their unit's expenditures and monitor expenses closely to ensure Aspect resources are being used efficiently.

**Graph 3:
Where the money was spent**



By group, Aspect Education accounted for 54% of total expenses, which was consistent with 2016 (56%). The Shared Services administrative costs were slightly

lower than 2016 at 8.57% (2016: 8.9%) of the total expenditure, which reflects Aspect's effective cost management resulting which places us at the lower end of the sector average. There was an ongoing focus on administrative cost management during 2017 together with the recognition that some additional capacity was required in respect of Quality Assurance, Finance, Human Resources and Work Health and Safety to accommodate the changes arising from the NDIS rollout.

By expense type, salary costs were \$73.40m representing 81.6% of total expenditure, which was consistent with 2016 (81.8%). All business units managed their staffing mix to take account of the demand for services.

The overall total of other expenses excluding employee expenses increased by \$1.56m, from \$15.02m in 2016 to \$16.58m in 2017. Within this, total consultant costs represented the highest non-salary expense item at \$2.40m, which was higher from 2016 (2016: \$1.60m). The majority of consultant expenses relate to the engagement of facilitators and learning specialists for workshops in the Positive Partnerships program. Phase Three of the Positive Partnerships program was commenced in late 2015 and the increase in consultant costs reflected a significant increase in the number of workshops delivered during the 2017 year.

Capital expenditure in 2017 was \$2.07m compared to \$2.70m in 2016, the majority of which was related to the implementation of Salesforce. The remainder relates to a range of improvements in Aspect's schools and technology connectivity across the whole organisation.

Assets & Reserves

Overall net assets of the organisation increased by \$4.25m to \$27.90m in 2017 from \$23.65m in 2016.

Aspect's Long Term Investment Reserve increased from \$3.54m as at December 2016 to \$4.23m at 31 December 2017. The portfolio is actively managed in conjunction with Aspect's investment advisers, JBWere and the performance of the portfolio is measured against defined benchmarks that are aligned with the long-term strategic objectives, liquidity considerations and risk profile. The Long Term Reserve is intended to be used in the event where Aspect needs to fund a major long term Board approved capital investment that is consistent with Aspect's strategic plan or to address a major adverse financial event. The income from bequests in 2017 will be added to the Long Term Reserve when the financial statements have been formally adopted.

Aspect also maintains a Tactical Reserve to provide a funding base for medium term projects that require capital funding. The balance of this reserve as at 31 December 2017 was \$1.27m, which was \$0.73m down from 2016 largely related to the implementation of the Enterprise Resource Planning system to better support its NDIS services. The operating surplus for the 2017 year will be added to the Tactical Reserve when the financial statements have been formally adopted.

The cash position fluctuates throughout the year and is influenced by the timing of government grants and school fees which are invoiced in three instalments. Ending period cash and cash equivalent balances increased to \$26.18m in 2017, up from \$23.28m in 2016. The increment of \$2.90m in cash was predominantly related to the strong financial performance during the year.

Management continually focuses on cash flow and the improvement of operating margins in order to position itself well for the future as it prepares for the full implementation of the NDIS in 2019. In addition, Aspect has in place a bank overdraft facility and also maintains a level of liquidity in the investment portfolio to cover potential temporary shortfalls. The overdraft facility was not drawn upon during 2017.

The trade payables balance of \$12.30m primarily reflects government grant income, which has been received in advance and will be expended on programs during 2018. The provisions balance, which totals \$10.20m, mainly comprises of annual leave and long service leave liabilities accrued for staff members.



Conclusion

A strong financial base is an essential element of delivering sustainable quality services. The robust financial result for 2017 enables Aspect to execute its strategic plan, increase the range of services and the geographical area in which it delivers its services. The continued phased implementation of the NDIS and changes in education funding provides ongoing challenges and opportunities that Aspect can best respond to from a sound financial base. The Board and management recognise the fine margins that apply to the services we provide and have been continually developing tools and processes to enhance Aspect's ability to proactively engage with the changing environment.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of the Finance team in Aspect who have continued to improve effective financial reporting processes during 2017, and to the Executive team as a whole for their continued focus on Aspect's financial dimensions.

Finally, I offer my sincere thanks to my colleagues on the Board, particularly those on the Audit and Risk Committee for their support during the year.

Henry Capra
Honorary Treasurer



"We are passionate about
people, about being positive
and about what's possible"



Anthony

Aspect Capable Job Seeker

Anthony has always had a diverse range of interests – with a particular love for history and science. At university, he decided to go down the science route, studying a Bachelor of Science in Astronomy and Astrophysics. He completed his Honours in 2008 and undertook a PhD the following year. He then went on to do a year of research at Sydney University – in a fellowship position specifically for people with a disability.

Despite his impressive academic pursuits, Anthony has found it difficult to gain any ongoing employment. Like many adults on the autism spectrum, his work-related challenges have largely been due to his anxiety, struggles with social interaction, and tiredness. He would worry about the interview process, how he would come across to the employer, and if he was successful, whether he would actually have the skills to carry out the job.

“Searching for jobs has been something fraught with anxiety for me, and the whole uncertainty of the situation would send me into a panic.”

The unemployment rate for adults on the spectrum is over 50% - dramatically higher than the national average as well as people with other disabilities. Tragically, this means the unique skills and strengths of these individuals are largely going to waste, and employers are missing out on a diverse talent pool.

That's why Anthony eventually made contact with the Aspect Capable employment team. The team provide coaching and mentoring, and link suitable employees with prospective employers, to make the job finding

process more manageable. They helped Anthony understand his skillset in order to point him in the direction of appropriate roles, and gave him the confidence to feel he could do well in those roles.

The key thing for him was the unconditional understanding the team provided – to know that even though he has various challenges, they were there to provide support and to tailor the situation to something he could deal with.

As a result of the support, Anthony landed a part-time role as a Systems Engineer at InfoSys, which contracts to large organisations such as Westpac.

“When I was offered the role, I felt really relieved. Given that the whole idea of getting a job had become something of an insurmountable problem in my mind, it felt a very big relief to actually be offered a job.”

Six months on, he's excelling. His manager, Sameer, and the wider team have been incredibly supportive and have created a low-pressure work environment which has greatly reduced Anthony's anxiety levels so he can concentrate on his tasks.

“I mainly enjoy the problem solving aspect. Every time I am given a new project, it is a bit frightening at first, but once I fully understand the task and have an idea in my head of how to carry it out, it is always very fulfilling to develop the algorithm, and find clever ways to meet the requirements of the project.”



"... it is always very fulfilling to develop the algorithm, and find clever ways to meet the requirements of the project."

Strategic Plan 2018 – 2020

The Strategic Plan 2018 - 2020 charts Aspect's course over the coming three years. Aspect's strategic plan has been designed to be flexible in order to cope with any future changes in the sector. Aspect is committed to monitoring the plan at its Board meetings, Executive meetings and Management Network meetings to ensure that the plan is being implemented. Any changes which impact the plan are progressively factored in.

The three-year plan is reviewed every year and stepped out one more year, so there is always a current three-year window. Aspect's strategic plan is built on a system which ensures that:

- Strategies produce competitive advantage;
- Strategies are linked to quantifiable objectives; and
- Strategies are implemented.

The Planning Guidelines

Strategy development takes place within a scope defined by the following guidelines:

- Always plan 3 years ahead;
- Have a Business Plan for the immediate year ahead;
- Have measurable key performance indicators; and
- Be financially sustainable.

Aspect's planning process

In order to have a rolling three year plan, Aspect has to manage two ongoing parallel planning processes. One is stepping out the current strategic plan by one more year (which is a nine month planning process) and the other is reporting on the implementation and outcomes of the current annual business plan for the current three-year strategic plan.

Below is the process for stepping out the current strategic plan by one more year:

- » A strategic audit of Aspect's external and internal environments is conducted
- » Management articulates their three year vision for the organisation
- » The Board and the Executive develop Aspect's core strategies as the foundation for the Strategic Plan
- » The Strategic Plan is developed around Aspect's key stakeholders
- » The Business Plan for the coming year is developed to drive the budget; and
- » Finally a set of Performance Indicators are approved by the Board, which define the success of the Business Plan for the coming year, and in the longer term the Strategic Plan.

Aspect's Performance	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of enquiries to Aspect	N/A	6,774	10,387	13,476	17,654
Number of active clients	N/A	N/A	5,962	7,307	7,719
Number of student places in Aspect's schools	968	982	1,024	1,071	1,111
% Net Promoter Score	N/A	75	72	79	80
\$m turnover	61.18	70.33	78.40	82.01	92.67
\$m received from government	51.37	57.90	66.10	68.97	77.20
\$m (net) received by fundraising	1.72	1.93	3.15	2.61	3.47
\$m Total Comprehensive Income	1.50	2.59	0.66	0.67	4.25

N/A = This particular data set was not collected at this time.

Aspect's key stakeholders

Integral to Aspect's success and the development of winning strategies is our focus on Key Stakeholders. These are the organisations and individuals with whom Aspect interacts and on whom it depends for success.

Aspect actively engages with its Key Stakeholders to build and maintain strong ongoing relationships. These relationships allow Aspect to identify strategic factors and actions that will ensure Aspect is meeting its Key Stakeholders' expectations. By succeeding in this task, Aspect gains competitive advantage and succeeds as an organisation.

Aspect's Key Stakeholders: 2018-2020

These are the organisations and individuals with whom Aspect interacts and on whom we depends for our success.

1. People on the autism spectrum
2. Families and carers of people on the autism spectrum
3. Governments
4. Supporters
5. Strategic partners
6. Aspect's staff

The Vision for Aspect in 2020

- Aspect will have an annual turnover of \$105m+, an operating surplus of between 1% and 1.5% with approximately 1500 staff and more than 10,000 active clients annually as a result of the continued organic and non-organic growth in Aspect's education and disability services.

- This will consolidate our position as the national provider of autism-specific services and supports for people on the autism spectrum and their families and carers by regularly providing services in five states and territories (NSW, Victoria South Australia, Queensland and the ACT) and nationally through a program of workshops and consultancies delivered by Aspect Practice.
- Aspect will also have consolidated its position as knowledge leader in services and supports that work for people on the spectrum and their families nationally, as well as having a growing impact internationally, especially in the Asia-Pacific Region.
- Aspect's point of difference in its service delivery will be achieved through the Aspect-wide implementation of the new Aspect Comprehensive Approach with autism-specific person-centred practice at its centre.
- The Aspect Comprehensive Approach will be shared externally and underpinned by Aspect's ongoing research activities into practice that works.
- Aspect will continue to strengthen its partnership with people on the spectrum through the Aspect Advisory Council comprised of people on the spectrum who will regularly advise the Board and the Executive on issues important to people on the spectrum and the organisation itself.

Aspect's Core Strategies: 2018 - 2020

1. Be person-centred, family-focused and customer-driven;
2. Be the national autism-specific service provider and knowledge leader for autism, and
3. Continue to build capacity and reach

Respite House Werribee, Victoria



For many children, young people and adults on the spectrum, taking some time out from family and carers who provide daily support can be difficult. But given the right environment and with the right support, spending some time away can be extremely beneficial and provide some much needed space and independence for both the person on the spectrum and their support network.

In recognition of these needs and benefits Aspect opened Respite House in Werribee, Victoria, in January 2017, offering person-centred respite for children and young people on the spectrum aged between 15 - 25 years of age.

Working closely with local community organisations such as Smart Communities and YMCA Victoria, the Aspect team at Respite House provide a range of activities to reflect the strengths and interests of the people using the service, including sport and recreation camps, choral singing, pantomime, and art groups.

Melissa Webster is the National Manager for Aspect Choose and Connect, and a strong advocate for Respite House's person-centred approach.

"The service offerings at Respite House have been specifically developed to cater to individuals on the spectrum and reflect Aspect's Purpose; understanding,

engaging and celebrating the strengths, interests and aspirations of people on the autism spectrum.

"To date it has been an extraordinary success with over 150 young people visiting the House in the first 12 months of opening, with a wide range of interests being catered for."

For young people living on the spectrum who like to engage in high-energy sporting and recreation activities, the centre's outdoor areas include a trampoline, swing, walking track, sensory garden and equipment storage for bikes and outdoor equipment.

For those wanting to develop skills to support a transition to the next level of independent holidaying, Aspect House provides day trips, camping experiences and even planned hotel stays.

Or if the person would prefer some quiet time, consideration has been given to the indoor areas to create calm sensory spaces for residents to feel at home and a fully accessible kitchen for young people to learn cooking skills to improve their health and increase personal well-being.

"Aspect has been involved since inception, providing specialist knowledge during the design and construction phase to ensure that the needs of young people on the spectrum were incorporate into the building design."

"The service offerings at Respite House have been specifically developed to cater to individuals on the spectrum."

Aspect's Fundraising

\$4.98
million
raised


39,245
supporters

2,995
monthly gift
donations made
through our Aspect
Partner in Change
program


12
gifts in wills left to
Aspect

32
organisations
partnered with
Aspect



2,741
participants

Aspect thanks all of our donors & supporters for their generous gifts throughout the year - all of you are helping to ensure that no-one on the autism spectrum is left behind.

Our supporters

Platinum

Aberdeen Asset Management Charitable Foundation
Accident & Health International Underwriting Pty Limited
ASX Thomson Reuters Charity Foundation
Commercial Club Albury Ltd
Dee Why RSL Club Ltd
Department of Family and Community Services
David Epper AO
Greater Charitable Foundation
Kenneth & Peter Gibbs Foundation
Parents & Friends of Aspect South Coast School
Parents & Friends of Aspect South East Sydney School
Parents & Friends of Aspect Vern Barnett School
Perpetual Philanthropic Services
The Bluesand Foundation
The Primary Club of Australia Inc
Western Suburbs (N'cle) Leagues Club Ltd
Westfield Community Program
Westfield Kotara
Woodend Foundation

Gold

Accessible Arts
Adelaide Crows Children Foundation
Chelsea Albert
Alfieris Foundation
AMP Foundation
Clasina Andrews
AON
Ralph Bierbaum
Donna Boughton
Cessnock Rugby League Supporters Club Ltd
Chatswood RSL Club
Barbara Cummins

John Doyle AM
Ernst & Young
Paolo Finamore
Adrian Ford
Forestville RSL Club Limited
Alex & Evi Giameos
L Glynn
Golden Stave Foundation
James Goldman
Mark & Hannah Gregory & Murphy
Bruce & Rachel Gunter
Guy Carpenter & Co Pty Ltd
Haulin' the Hume
Hornsby RSL Club Limited
Inner Wheel Club of Wollongong Inc
Jardine Lloyd Thompson
John T Reid Charitable Trust
Erina Jones
Liangrove Foundation Pty Ltd
Macquarie Group Foundation
Marsh Pty Ltd
MasoniCare
Michael and Mary Whelan Trust
Roz Milne
Oasis Australasia
Optus Pty Ltd
Mary O'Sullivan
Parents & Friends Committee Aspect Central Coast School
Parents & Friends Committee Aspect Hunter School
Parents & Friends Committee Aspect Macarthur School
Parents & Friends Committee Aspect Western Sydney School
Kathleen Pigram
Pittwater RSL Club Limited
Propertylink
Quattro Risk Services
Ramm Botanicals Pty Ltd
Scentsy, Inc

SLE Worldwide
The Schlosser Family
The Helen Leech Endowment
The R A Gale Foundation
TLE Electrical
University of Wollongong
Simone Van den Berg
Dane Waites
Walter Campbell Memorial Trust
Western Suburbs Soccer, Sports & Community Club Ltd
Woonona Womens Bowling Club

Silver

Paul Alexander
Australian Sports Commission
Catholic Club Limited
Experian Asia Pacific
Stephen Harris
Robin McCosker
Roger Montgomery
Montgomery Investment Management
Northern Beaches Council
TAL Dai-ichi Life Australia Pty Ltd
VivCourt Trading Pty Ltd

Gifts in Will

Ronald Armour
Agnes Broadfoot
John Davis JP
Lindsay Foote
Marie Goodare
Marion Kingston
Henryk Kitaszewski
Valve Klavins
Nathalie Kulakowski
Pamela Ross
Joyce Sivertsen
Patrick Stewart

In 2017, 12 generous people left gifts totally \$886,000 in support of Aspect in their wills. At Aspect we use these gift in will donations in a very special way. These gifts are carefully invested and used for major projects that will endure for decades. All the gifts received this year will be used to build a new school catering for children from K to 12 and beyond into transition to further education and work. These legacies will endure for years to come and help create a brighter future for hundreds of children and their families. If you would like to find out more about our Gifts in Will program please contact Laura Guille on 1800 288 476.

Our People

2017 Spirit of Aspect Awards

Aspect's strength lies in the passion of its people and our continued success as an organisation is intrinsically linked with the skills, knowledge and experience of the people who work with us. We value, respect and promote the diversity of our team as we believe this can lead to new insights and new thinking about our approach and our work.

We believe our work makes a difference and we offer a career that creates opportunities. Together, we're inspired by *a different brilliant - understanding, engaging and celebrating the strengths, interests and aspirations of people on the autism spectrum*. Whether our staff are helping us in shared services or working directly with the people we support, they are committed to our person-centred, evidence-informed environment. Our staff go the extra mile and never lose sight of what's possible.

Nominated by colleagues, the Spirit of Aspect Awards recognise staff who demonstrate exemplary practice in applying one of Aspect's values, People, Positive and Passionate, to their day to day work

Congratulations to all recipients of the 2017 Spirit of Aspect staff awards presented at Aspect's Annual General Meeting in May.

Aspect employees (left to right) Rochelle Cooper, Betsy Shepard Reed, Stephen Manning, Kaye Perry & Ben Campbell

2017 Award Recipients

Passionate about people:

Stephen Manning and Gabi Moras (absent)

Passionate about being positive:

Rochelle Cooper and Betsy Shepard Reed

Passionate about what's possible:

Kaye Perry and Ben Campbell

2017 Aspect Safety Award

Aspect's commitment to safety depends on the willingness of every individual to make the workplace healthy and safe and to take care of themselves, their colleagues and the people we support.

The Aspect Safety Award was a new award in 2017. It recognises a member of the Aspect team that has demonstrated an exemplary commitment to Work Health and Safety, and who has gone above and beyond to ensure a safe environment for everyone.

2017 Aspect Safety Award recipient was Timothy Baker, from the Aspect Choose and Connect Victoria team.





Aspect employees (left to right) Mark Durie, Rowena Perritt & Joanne Tisdell

Employees

1,223

Aspect employees



59%

Aspect
Education

32%

NDIS Services
and Strategic
Partnering

9%

National Office,
Aspect Practice
& Positive
Partnerships

28%

Full time

45%

Part time

27%

Casual



84% Female

16% Male

Diversity

2.7%

Aspect staff
identify as
being on the
spectrum

2.5%

Aspect staff
identify as
being Aboriginal
or Torres Strait
Islander

Staff length of Service (presented at 2017 AGM)

10 years 21 staff

15 years 18 staff

20 years 4 staff

25 years 2 staff

30 years 1 staff

Directors' report

The Directors present their report together with the financial report of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) for the year ended 31 December 2017 and the auditor's report thereon.

As defined in section 205-30 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 the Directors referred to in these financial statements are Aspect's Responsible Entities for the purposes of that Act.

Directors

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



Julie Hamblin, Chair of the Board

Julie Hamblin, B.A., LL.B (Hons) (Syd), LL.M (McGill), GAICD, has worked for more than 25 years as a lawyer and policy consultant in health law, clinical risk, disability and international development. A former partner of HWL Ebsworth, she has served on numerous government and non-government advisory bodies in the areas of health, medical research and clinical risk, including international work with United Nations agencies on HIV policy. Julie is Deputy Chair of Plan International Australia and a member of the Australian Research Integrity Committee. She joined the Aspect Board in April 2010 and is a Member of the Audit and Risk Committee, the Governance Committee and the Strategy Committee. Julie is a Member-elected Director.

Jeanie Young, Immediate Past Chair

Jeanie Young, B.Bus., FAICD, leads the Technology, Media & Entertainment and Telecommunications segment, and is a Customer Advisory Partner at Ernst & Young. She was formerly Executive Director, NBN Transition at Telstra Corporation Limited. Jenny has held senior marketing positions for Unilever, Lion Nathan, Pepsi and Telstra, and has worked in New Zealand, the United Kingdom and Australia. Jenny has a son on the autism spectrum. She joined the Board in March 2010 and is the Chair of the Fundraising and Communications Committee and a member of the Governance Committee. Jenny is a Member-elected Director.



Henry Capra, Honorary Treasurer

Henry Capra, B.Ec., ACA, has more than 27 years of senior management and finance experience in the financial services industry. He is currently a non-executive director of Suncorp Portfolio Services Limited, CBHS Corporate Health Limited and Millinium Capital Managers Limited. He has held senior positions at JP Morgan, Blackrock, AMP Capital, Colonial First State Investments, BNP Paribas Asset Management and Barclays Global Investors after commencing his career with chartered accountants KPMG. Henry joined the Aspect Board in December 2010 and chairs the Audit and Risk Committee. Henry is a Member-elected Director.

Robert J. Brown, Director

Robert J. Brown, GAICD, B.Sc., M.A. (Applied Mathematics), Grad. Dip. Applied Finance, is the founder of management consultancy firm Alford Brown & Associates, and also executive officer of the Australian Custodial Services Association. Rob has previously held senior executive roles with HSBC, Westpac, the Commonwealth Bank and State Street Bank. He is experienced in the governance of not-for-profit organisations, and has a personal interest in special education and the needs of children with learning difficulties. Rob joined the Board in June 2008, formerly held the position of Honorary Treasurer, and remains a member of the Audit and Risk Committee. Rob is a Member-elected Director.





Annette Gallard, Director

Annette Gallard, PSM, B. Soc. Stud., M. Comm, has more than 20 years' experience as a senior executive in the NSW Public Service in both the Housing and Community Services Portfolios. She retired from the position of Chief Executive of the NSW Department of Community Services in 2011 and has since focused on assisting the not-for-profit sector as a Board Member. She was awarded the Public Service Medal in 2012 for services to disadvantaged communities particularly Aboriginal people. Annette joined the Board in March, 2014 and is the Chair of the Governance Committee and a member of the Strategy Committee. Annette is a Member-elected Director.

Laurie Horin, Director

Laurie Horin, B.Bus., FCA, F Fin, has more than 25 years' experience in professional accounting, corporate and investment management, and investment banking. Laurie has worked extensively in Australia, the USA and South East Asia. He was an executive director of Carlisle Partners, a corporate advisory firm specialising in mergers and acquisitions, debt and equity funding for mid-market companies. He was also a board member of a number of client companies. Laurie joined the Board in September, 2012, is a member of the Audit and Risk Committee and chairs the Strategy Committee. Laurie is a Member-elected Director.



Ian Joseph, Director

Ian Joseph, B.Bus., Grad Dip Ed, FAMI, AFAIM, is a private banking and finance industry consultant and a former Chair of the Agribusiness Council of Australia. He was formerly Head of Strategy - Service and Sales with Regional and Agribusiness Banking at the Commonwealth Bank. Ian and his family care for his sister who is on the spectrum. Ian joined the Board in March, 2011, and is a member of the Strategy Committee and the Fundraising and Communications Committee. Ian is a Member-elected Director.

Karyn Sobels, Director (resigned 13 September 2017)

Karyn Sobels, MComLaw, BA, GAICD, is a Director of Simply Business, a business advisory firm based in Melbourne. Previously a senior executive in banking and retail, she is also a non-executive director of several other companies, including the Telstra Licensee Association, and serves on the Risk and Audit Committee of the Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Karyn was the former Chair of the Board of Alpha Autism Inc. and has a personal interest in the development of support services for adults and children with autism. Karyn joined the Aspect Board in June, 2015 and was a member of the Fundraising and Communications Committee. Karyn was a Member-elected Director.



Paul Stevenson, Director (appointed on 1 September, 2017)

Paul Stevenson Acting Chief Marketing Officer and Customer Segmentation lead for Prospa Advance LTD. He was previously Qantas Airlines Group Head of Customer Insight. Before that Paul has held senior roles in Foxtel, Vodafone and Virgin Media in the UK. Paul has a son on the autism spectrum. He joined the Board in September 2017 and is a Member of the Fundraising & Communications Committee and the Strategy Committee. Paul has been appointed by the Board to fill a casual vacancy.

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

Meetings of Directors

	Directors' Meetings		Audit and Risk Committee (formerly the Finance and Audit Committee)		Strategy Group		Governance Committee (formerly the Nominations and Remuneration Committee)		Fundraising and Communications Committee	
	No. of meetings attended	No. of meetings held	No. of meetings attended	No. of meetings held	No. of meetings attended	No. of meetings held	No. of meetings attended	No. of meetings held	No. of meetings attended	No. of meetings held
Ms J Hamblin	7	7	9	10	3	5	4	4		
Ms J Young	4	7					4	4	2	2
Mr H Capra	7	7	10	10						
Mr R Brown	4	7	8	10						
Ms A Gallard	7	7			5	5	4	4		
Mr L Horin	6	7	7	10	4	5				
Mr I Joseph	6	7			5	5			2	2
Ms K Sobels	0	5							1	2
Mr P Stevenson	2	2			1	1			0	1

Company Secretary

Adrian Ford, who is also the Chief Executive Officer, held the position of Company Secretary at the end of the financial year:

Name & Qualifications:

Mr Adrian Ford FAICD, B. Soc.Stud

Appointment date:

2000

Principal activities

The principal activities of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) are to provide a range of services to children, young people and adults on the autism spectrum that are person-centred, family-focused and customer-driven. These include customer engagement services, diagnostic and assessment services, therapy services (speech pathology, occupational therapy and psychology) including behaviour support programs, educational services for school-aged children to prepare them for transition to environments that are not autism-specific, short term accommodation services, individually-funded and block-funded programs for children, young people and adults in response to their individual needs, strengths and capabilities. A range of support services are provided to families of people on the spectrum. As well the provision of workshops, training and consultation to other professionals and parents in ways of working

with people on the spectrum continues as does Aspect's research program. There were no significant changes in the nature of its activities during the year.

Short- and long-term objectives

Aspect's long-term objective or vision is the best opportunities for people on the autism spectrum. It does this through its mission by working with people of all ages on the autism spectrum, delivering evidence-informed solutions that are person-centred, family-focused and customer-driven.

Its short-term objectives for the next three years are:

1. Be person-centred, family-focused and customer-driven;
2. Be the national autism-specific service provider and a global knowledge leader for autism; and
3. Continue to build capacity and reach.

Strategies for achieving those objectives

Aspect's strategies for achieving these objectives include:

- achieve its point of difference in service delivery through the Aspect-wide implementation of the new Aspect Comprehensive Approach with autism-specific person-centred practice at its centre;

- continue to strengthen its partnership with people on the spectrum through the Aspect Advisory Council comprising people on the spectrum who will regularly advise the Board and the Executive on issues important to people on spectrum and the organisation itself;
- continue to focus on growth opportunities in both education and disability nationally under the ongoing education funding reforms and the rollout of the NDIS, supported by alliances and the integration of other organisations into Aspect that extend its reach and capability in the services it offers to people on the spectrum;
- consolidate its position as knowledge leader in services and supports that work for people on the spectrum and their families nationally as well as having a growing impact internationally, especially in the Asia Pacific;
- encouraging supporters to continue to increase their giving to Aspect; and
- attracting the best people to work at Aspect, ensuring high levels of engagement and staff retention.

The Board continuously reviews the entity's performance against these strategic objectives using a set of key performance indicators which include indicators on service performance, funding from government and fundraising, human resource management and financial performance.

Financial result

The surplus for 2017 was \$3,947,890 (2016: surplus \$673,685).

Review of operations

Government grants continued to provide the major operational income for Aspect, supported by fundraising and contribution by clients' families for some of the services through a fee for service charge. Income from these three sources increased in 2017 to \$91,400,190 compared with \$81,691,594 in 2016. This represents 97.3% of Aspect's total income.

Contribution on winding up

The company is incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001 and is a company limited by guarantee. If the company is wound up, the constitution states that

each member is required to contribute a maximum of \$20 towards meeting any outstanding obligations of the entity. At 31 December 2017, the total amount that members of the company would have been liable to contribute if the company was wound up was \$3,500 (2016: \$3,600).

Significant changes in state of affairs

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

Events after the reporting 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 Aspect to affect significantly the operations of Aspect, the results of the operations, or the state of affairs of Aspect, in subsequent financial years.

Auditor's independence declaration

A copy of the auditor's independence declaration as required under section 60-40 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 for the year ended 31 December 2017 has been received and can be found on page 36 of the annual report.

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



Julie Hamblin
Chair of the Board

Dated this 23rd day of March 2018 at Sydney

Auditor's Independence Declaration



Level 17, 383 Kent Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Correspondence to:
Locked Bag Q800
QVB Post Office
Sydney NSW 1230

T +61 2 8297 2400
F +61 2 9299 4445
E info.nsw@au.gt.com
W www.granthornton.com.au

Auditor's Independence Declaration to the Directors of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)

In accordance with the requirements of section 60-40 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, as lead auditor for the audit of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) for the year ended 31 December 2017, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

A stylized, handwritten-style signature of "Grant Thornton" in purple ink.

Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd
Chartered Accountants

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to be "C F Farley".

C F Farley
Partner - Audit & Assurance

Sydney, 23 March 2018

Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd ACN 130 913 594
a subsidiary or related entity of Grant Thornton Australia Ltd ABN 41 127 556 389

'Grant Thornton' refers to the brand under which the Grant Thornton member firms provide assurance, tax and advisory services to their clients and/or refers to one or more member firms, as the context requires. Grant Thornton Australia Ltd is a member firm of Grant Thornton International Ltd (GTIL). GTIL and the member firms are not a worldwide partnership. GTIL and each member firm is a separate legal entity. Services are delivered by the member firms. GTIL does not provide services to clients. GTIL and its member firms are not agents of, and do not obligate one another and are not liable for one another's acts or omissions. In the Australian context only, the use of the term 'Grant Thornton' may refer to Grant Thornton Australia Limited ABN 41 127 556 389 and its Australian subsidiaries and related entities. GTIL is not an Australian related entity to Grant Thornton Australia Limited.

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.

Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income

For the year ended 31 December 2017

	Notes	2017 \$	2016 \$
Revenue from rendering of services		11,170,479	8,810,853
Federal/state grants and salary subsidies		75,244,799	69,032,548
Fundraising		4,984,912	3,848,193
Other revenue		2,518,868	1,467,589
Total Income	3	93,919,058	83,159,183
Employee expenses		(73,393,981)	(67,465,308)
Transportation costs		(2,749,572)	(2,351,434)
Insurance expense		(1,207,759)	(1,625,282)
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	4	(1,190,328)	(1,084,982)
Finance costs	4	(46,907)	(59,896)
Services		(3,898,944)	(3,585,847)
Other expenses from ordinary activities		(7,483,677)	(6,312,749)
Total Expenses		(89,971,168)	(82,485,498)
Surplus for the year		3,947,890	673,685
Other omprehensive income			
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of investments		215,589	(55,685)
Net gain on sale of investments		83,455	58,965
Other comprehensive income for the year		299,044	3,280
Total comprehensive income for the year		4,246,934	676,965

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of financial position

As at 31 December 2017

	Notes	2017 \$	2016 \$
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	25,651,289	23,028,358
Trade and other receivables	7	603,149	376,727
Other financial assets	8	529,078	249,145
Other assets	9	1,392,541	1,092,573
Total current assets		28,176,057	24,746,803
Non-current assets			
Other financial assets	8	4,226,946	3,536,625
Property, plant and equipment	10	19,060,353	19,035,582
Total non-current assets		23,287,299	22,572,207
Total assets		51,463,356	47,319,010
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	11	12,272,185	13,424,916
Short term borrowings	12	109,246	101,910
Short term provisions	13	8,182,900	6,978,090
Total current liabilities		20,564,331	20,504,916
Non-current liabilities			
Long term borrowings	12	969,636	1,082,728
Long term provisions	13	2,027,795	2,076,706
Total non-current liabilities		2,997,431	3,159,434
Total liabilities		23,561,762	23,664,350
Net assets		27,901,594	23,654,660
Equity			
Asset revaluation reserve	14	161,080	(54,509)
Asset realisation reserve	14	(789,220)	(872,675)
Accumulated surplus		28,529,734	24,581,844
Total equity		27,901,594	23,654,660

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of changes in equity

For the year ended 31 December 2017

	Asset Revaluation Reserve \$	Asset Realisation Reserve \$	Retained Earnings \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 January 2016	1,176	(931,640)	23,908,159	22,977,695
Surplus for the year	-	-	673,685	673,685
Total other comprehensive income for the year	(55,685)	58,965	-	3,280
Balance at 31 December 2016	(54,509)	(872,675)	24,581,844	23,654,660
Surplus for the year	-	-	3,947,890	3,947,890
Total other comprehensive income for the year	215,589	83,455	-	299,044
Balance at 31 December 2017	161,080	(789,220)	28,529,734	27,901,594

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 December 2017

	Notes	2017 \$	2016 \$
Cash flows from operating activities			
Receipts from customers and grants		91,597,611	84,682,902
Payments to suppliers and employees		(87,965,872)	(78,932,452)
Interest received		632,397	665,467
Dividend received		148,365	89,161
Interest paid		(46,907)	(59,896)
Net cash provided by operating activities		4,365,594	6,445,182
Cash flows from investing activities			
Proceeds on disposal of investments		1,099,403	643,941
Payments for investments		(391,277)	(762,003)
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		(2,065,099)	(2,697,576)
Net cash used in investing activities		(1,356,973)	(2,815,638)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Repayment of borrowings		(105,757)	(80,479)
Net cash used in financing activities		(105,757)	(80,479)
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents held		2,902,864	3,549,065
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		23,277,503	19,728,438
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	6	26,180,367	23,277,503

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2017

1 General information and statement of compliance

The financial report includes the financial statements and notes of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect).

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements that have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. Aspect is a not-for-profit entity for the purpose of preparing the financial statements.

The financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2017 (including comparatives) were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Directors (who are Aspect's Responsible Entities under the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*) on 23 March 2018.

2 Statement of significant accounting policies

Changes in accounting policies

There have been no changes to the accounting policies applied by the company during the reporting period.

New and revised accounting standards that are effective for annual periods beginning on or after 1 January 2017

A number of new and revised standards became effective for the first time for accounting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2017. There was no material impact on the financial statements as the changes are largely clarifications of existing requirements.

Summary of accounting policies

The significant accounting policies that have been used in the preparation of these financial statements are summarised below.

The financial statements have been prepared using the measurement bases specified by Australian Accounting Standards for each type of asset, liability, income and expense. The measurement bases are more fully described in the accounting policies below.

All amounts are presented in Australian dollars which is Aspect's functional and presentation currency, unless otherwise noted.

a. Income tax

Under Section 50-1 and 50-5 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997, the income of Aspect is exempt from income tax.

b. Property, plant and equipment

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

Property

Freehold land and buildings purchased are recorded at cost.

Freehold land and buildings that have been donated, are valued at the fair value of the asset at the date it is acquired, in accordance with the requirements of AASB 1004: Contributions.

Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment are measured on the cost basis less depreciation and impairment losses.

Property and equipment are reviewed each year for impairment or whenever events or changes in business circumstances indicate that the carrying value of the assets may not be recoverable. Impairment losses are recognised if expected future cash flows from the assets are less than their carrying values.

Plant and equipment that have been donated are valued at the fair value of the asset at the date it is acquired, in accordance with the requirements of AASB 1004: Contributions.

Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets, excluding freehold land, is depreciated on a straight-line basis over the useful life to Aspect commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful life of the improvement.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable assets are:

<i>Class of fixed asset</i>	<i>Depreciation rate</i>
Buildings	2.5%
Building with demountable classrooms	10%
Leasehold improvements	10%
Plant and equipment	20-33%
Library	10%

Residual values and useful lives of assets are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each balance sheet date.

The carrying amount of an asset is written down immediately to its recoverable amount if the carrying amount is greater than the estimated recoverable amount.

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with the carrying amount. These gains or losses are included in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income. When revalued assets are sold, amounts included in the revaluation reserve relating to that asset are transferred to retained earnings.

c. Leases

Operating leases

Where the company is a lessee, payments on operating lease agreements are recognised as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term. Associated costs, such as maintenance and insurance, are expensed as incurred.

d. Financial assets

Initial recognition and measurement

Financial instruments, incorporating financial assets and financial liabilities, are recognised when the entity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Financial instruments are classified and measured as set out below.

Classification and subsequent measurement

Financial assets measured at amortised cost

Loans and receivables are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market and are stated at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

Financial assets at fair value through other

comprehensive income

Aspect early adopted AASB 9 *Financial Instruments* in 2010 and therefore all investments form part of Aspect's investment portfolio and have been classified as available for sale financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income.

Unrealised gains and losses arising from changes in fair value are taken directly to equity (into the asset revaluation reserve).

Realised gains or losses on the sale of investments are transferred from the asset revaluation reserve into the asset realisation reserve.

Financial liabilities

Non-derivative financial liabilities (excluding financial guarantees) are subsequently measured at amortised cost.

Fair value

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

Impairment of financial assets

At each reporting date, Aspect assesses whether there is objective evidence that a financial instrument has been impaired. Impairment losses on financial assets other than those held at fair value through other comprehensive income are recognised in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income.

Derecognition

Financial assets are derecognised where the contractual rights to receipt of cash flows expire or the asset is transferred to another party whereby the entity no longer has any significant continuing involvement in the risks and benefits associated with the asset. Financial liabilities are derecognised where the related obligations are either discharged, cancelled or expire. The difference between the carrying value of the financial liability extinguished or transferred to another party and the fair value of consideration paid, including the transfer of non-cash assets or liabilities assumed is recognised in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income.

e. Impairment of non-financial assets

At each reporting date, Aspect reviews the carrying values of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell or 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 statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income. Where it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, the company estimates the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs

f. Employee benefits

Provision is made for Aspect's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees up to the reporting date. Employee benefits that are expected to be settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled, plus related on-costs.

Employee benefits payable later than one year have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits plus related on-costs using a high quality corporate bond rate that represents the period to the expected payment.

Aspect contributes to several contribution superannuation plans. Contributions are charged against income in the period to which they relate.

g. Provisions

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

h. Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents includes cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within short-term borrowings in current liabilities on the statement of financial position.

i. Revenue and other income

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised when goods are provided to entities outside Aspect.

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

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

Grant monies and donations are recognised upon receipt of the monies. Where conditions are attached to the receipt of these monies, revenue is only recognised once these conditions have been fulfilled and the company is assured of control of the funds.

j. Goods and services tax (GST)

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

Cash flows are presented in the statement of cash flows on a gross basis, except for the GST components of investing and financing activities, which are disclosed as operating cash flows.

k. Borrowing costs

Borrowing costs directly attributable to the acquisition, construction or production of assets that necessarily take a substantial period of time to prepare for their intended use or sale, are added to the cost of those assets, until such time as the assets are substantially ready for their intended use or sale.

All other borrowing costs are expensed in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income in the period in which they are incurred.

l. Government grants

A number of the company's programs are supported by grants received from the federal and state governments.

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

Where a grant is received on the condition that specified services are delivered to the grantor, this is considered a reciprocal transaction. Revenue is recognised as services are performed during the year.

Revenue from a non-reciprocal grant that is not subject to conditions is recognised when the company obtains control of the funds, economic benefits are probable and the amount can be measured reliably. Where a grant may be required to be repaid if certain conditions are not satisfied, a liability is recognised at the year end to the extent that such conditions remain unsatisfied.

m. Comparative figures

When required by Accounting Standards, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform to changes in presentation for the current financial year.

n. Critical accounting estimates and judgements

The directors evaluate estimates and judgements incorporated into the financial report based on historical knowledge and best available current information. Estimates are based on a reasonable expectation of future events and are based on current trends and economic data, obtained both externally and within Aspect.

Key estimates - Impairment

Aspect assesses impairment at each reporting date by evaluating conditions specific to the company that may lead to the impairment of assets. Where an impairment trigger exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is determined. Value-in-use calculations performed in assessing recoverable amounts incorporate a number of key estimates.

Key estimates - Long service leave

Management continue to review the probability factors used to accurately reflect the liability for long service leave for all staff.

The Directors believe that there are no other key estimates or judgements.

3 Revenue from ordinary activities

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
School fees	6,145,844	5,375,385
Other fee for service	5,024,635	3,435,468
Federal grants	32,004,621	25,344,406
State grants and subsidies	43,240,178	43,688,142
Donations and bequests	4,984,912	3,848,193
Other revenue	2,518,868	1,467,589
Total revenue from ordinary activities	93,919,058	83,159,183

4 Operating surplus from operating activities

Operating surplus from operating activities has been arrived at after charging the following items:

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
Depreciation of:		
- Freehold buildings	88,278	88,520
- Leasehold buildings	262,230	263,093
- Office machines and equipment	349,102	314,106
- School library	678	2,535
Amortisation of:		
- Leasehold improvements	490,040	416,728
Total depreciation and amortisation	1,190,328	1,084,982
Finance costs		
- Bank loans and overdraft interest and fees	46,907	59,896
Net bad and doubtful debts expenses including movements in provision for doubtful debts	(20,593)	184,320
Net expenses from movements in provision for employee benefits	3,675,513	3,600,712
Operating lease and other rental payments during the year	1,227,750	1,157,948
Net loss/(gain) on disposal of non-current assets	(249,403)	-

5 Taxation

Aspect is a charitable institution and meets the necessary conditions for its income to be exempted from income tax under Sections 50-1 and 50-5 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

6 Cash and cash equivalents

	Notes	2017 \$	2016 \$
Cash at bank		25,641,395	23,008,387
Cash on hand		9,894	19,971
Cash and cash equivalents		<u>25,651,289</u>	<u>23,028,358</u>

Reconciliation of Cash

For the purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash includes cash on hand, cash at bank and cash equivalents and short-term deposits at call, net of outstanding bank overdrafts. Cash at the end of the financial year as shown in the statement of cash flows is reconciled to the related items in the statement of financial position as follows:

		2017 \$	2016 \$
Cash at bank and on hand		25,651,289	23,028,358
Bank term deposits	8	529,078	249,145
		<u>26,180,367</u>	<u>23,277,503</u>

7 Trade and other receivables

	2017 \$	2016 \$
Fees and government subsidies	922,400	835,562
Less: Provision for doubtful debts	(331,489)	(486,240)
	<u>590,911</u>	<u>349,322</u>
Other receivables	12,238	27,405
	<u>603,149</u>	<u>376,727</u>

The company does not have any material credit risk exposure to any single receivable or group of receivables.

At 31 December 2017, the ageing analysis of trade receivables was as follows:

	Total	0-30 days	31-60 days	61-90 days	91+ days
2017	922,400	385,608	101,971	74,539	360,282
2016	835,562	151,505	109,172	88,645	486,240

Trade receivables are non-interest bearing loans and generally on 30-day terms. A provision for impairment loss is recognised when there is objective evidence that an individual trade receivable is impaired. A reversal of \$20,593 in expense was recognised in 2017 (2016: expense of \$184,320).

	2017 \$	2016 \$
Balance at 1 January 2017	486,240	373,492
Charge for the year	(20,593)	184,320
Amounts written off	(134,158)	(71,572)
Balance at 31 December 2017	<u>331,489</u>	<u>486,240</u>

Receivables past due but not considered impaired are:

31-60 days	\$101,971	(2016: \$109,172)
61-90 days	\$74,539	(2016: \$88,645)
91 days and over	\$28,793	(2016: \$nil)

These receivables relate to fee for service charges for school fees, other fee for service charges and contracted government grants. These receivables are not considered impaired as, based on historic recovery patterns, they are recovered before ageing beyond 120 days.

8 Other financial assets

	2017 \$	2016 \$
Current		
Bank term deposits	<u>529,078</u>	<u>249,145</u>
Non-current		
Available for sale financial assets	<u>4,226,946</u>	<u>3,536,625</u>

The available for sale financial assets are Aspect's investment portfolio. They are measured at fair value on a recurring basis.

9 Other assets

	2017 \$	2016 \$
Accrued income	943,502	690,031
Prepayments	<u>449,039</u>	<u>402,542</u>
	<u>1,392,541</u>	<u>1,092,573</u>

10 Property and equipment

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
Freehold land and buildings - at deemed cost	6,193,461	7,043,461
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(501,405)	(413,127)
	<u>5,692,056</u>	<u>6,630,334</u>
Leasehold buildings - at cost	10,501,200	10,488,590
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(2,738,074)	(2,475,843)
	<u>7,763,126</u>	<u>8,012,747</u>
Leasehold improvements - at cost	7,028,578	6,384,461
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(3,297,674)	(2,807,635)
	<u>3,730,904</u>	<u>3,576,826</u>
Office machines and equipment - at cost	5,609,609	4,224,509
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(3,735,721)	(3,409,891)
	<u>1,873,888</u>	<u>814,618</u>
School library - at cost	27,873	27,874
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(27,494)	(26,817)
	<u>379</u>	<u>1,057</u>
Total property, plant and equipment	<u><u>19,060,353</u></u>	<u><u>19,035,582</u></u>

	Freehold land and buildings (a)	Leasehold buildings	Leasehold improvements	Office machines and equipment	School library	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Asset gross carrying amount						
Balance at 1 Jan 2017	7,043,461	10,488,590	6,384,461	4,224,509	27,874	28,168,895
Additions	-	12,610	644,117	1,408,372	-	2,065,099
Disposals	(850,000)	-	-	(23,272)	-	(873,272)
Balance at 31 Dec 2017	<u>6,193,461</u>	<u>10,501,200</u>	<u>7,028,578</u>	<u>5,609,609</u>	<u>27,874</u>	<u>29,360,722</u>
Accumulated depreciation						
Balance at 1 Jan 2017	(413,127)	(2,475,843)	(2,807,635)	(3,409,891)	(26,817)	(9,133,313)
Depreciation	(88,278)	(262,231)	(490,039)	(349,102)	(678)	(1,190,328)
Disposals	-	-	-	23,272	-	23,272
Balance at 31 Dec 2017	<u>(501,405)</u>	<u>(2,738,074)</u>	<u>(3,297,674)</u>	<u>(3,735,721)</u>	<u>(27,495)</u>	<u>(10,300,369)</u>
Carrying amount 31 December 2017	<u><u>5,692,056</u></u>	<u><u>7,763,126</u></u>	<u><u>3,730,904</u></u>	<u><u>1,873,888</u></u>	<u><u>379</u></u>	<u><u>19,060,353</u></u>

11 Trade and other payables

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
Current		
Trade creditors	345,863	791,775
Other creditors and accruals	4,062,141	2,948,760
Goods and services tax payable	400,528	782,314
Government subsidies in advance	7,463,653	8,902,067
	<u>12,272,185</u>	<u>13,424,916</u>

12 Borrowings

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
Current		
Bank loan - secured	<u>109,246</u>	<u>101,910</u>
Non-current		
Bank loan - secured	<u>969,636</u>	<u>1,082,728</u>

There is one bank loan denominated in Australian dollars. The amount in current liabilities comprises the portion of the bank loan payable within one year. The non-current balance represents the portion of the bank loan not due within one year.

The bank loan with Westpac is secured by first mortgage over Aspect's land at Thornton and Corrimall, as well as the lease at Terrigal and a fixed/floating charge over Aspect's assets. The business loan bears interest at 4.22% (2016: 4.46%) per annum, payable monthly and is expected to be repaid by 2029. The purpose of the loan was to finance the upgrade project of Vern Barnett School.

In addition, interest on the above mentioned loan is partly subsidised by the Department of Education NSW. The rate varies and is currently reimbursed at about 3.46% per annum.

Financing arrangements

Aspect has access to the following financial facilities:

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
Total facilities available:		
Bank overdraft	150,000	150,000
Bank loans	<u>1,078,882</u>	<u>1,184,638</u>
Facilities utilised at reporting date:		
Bank loans	<u>1,078,882</u>	<u>1,184,638</u>

13 Provisions

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
Current		
Provision for remediation of leasehold properties	180,000	60,000
Provision for long service leave	6,197,682	5,410,525
Provision for annual leave	<u>1,805,218</u>	<u>1,507,565</u>
	<u>8,182,900</u>	<u>6,978,090</u>
Non-current		
Provision for remediation of leasehold properties	760,000	820,000
Provision for long service leave	<u>1,267,795</u>	<u>1,256,706</u>
	<u>2,027,795</u>	<u>2,076,706</u>
	<u>10,210,695</u>	<u>9,054,796</u>

14 Reserves

The asset revaluation reserve records revaluations in available for sale financial assets. The asset realisation reserve records the gain or loss on disposal of financial assets.

15 Commitments and contingencies

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
Non-cancellable operating lease expense commitments		
Future operating lease rentals not provided for in the financial statements and payable:		
Within one year	1,102,031	981,165
One year or later and not later than five years	<u>1,743,526</u>	<u>1,673,632</u>
	<u>2,845,557</u>	<u>2,654,797</u>

Aspect leases property and equipment under non-cancellable operating leases expiring from 1 to 73 years. Leases generally provide Aspect with a right of renewal at which time all terms are renegotiated.

The company has no contractual commitments for the acquisition of property, plant and equipment.

There are no contingent liabilities that have been incurred by Aspect in relation to 2017 or 2016.

16 Fundraising Appeals conducted during the year

Fundraising appeals conducted during the financial period included mail and telephone appeals, payroll giving, raffles, Celebrity Golf Day, Walk for autism, merchandise sales, applications to trusts, foundations and registered clubs, donations provided by corporate, community group and club fundraising events and the general receiving of directly and indirectly solicited donations and bequests.

This money helped to supplement the income received from governments and fees. As a result Aspect was able to expand the range and level of the services provided for people with autism and their families.

In particular this income was used to fund part of the redevelopment of Aspect's schools, resources for Aspect schools, Aspect therapy services, some services for adults with autism and some of the work of the Aspect Research team.

The cost of raising these funds was 30% (2016: 32%) of the gross revenue received. This included the costs of events, all promotional activity and the payment for all administrative services including salaries for Aspect Fundraising staff.

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
Results of fundraising appeals		
Community fundraising	1,501,718	1,042,688
Individual giving	1,663,532	1,567,333
Philanthropy	933,583	1,129,019
Bequest	886,079	109,153
Less: Total costs of fundraising appeals	(1,508,525)	(1,237,243)
Net surplus	<u>3,476,387</u>	<u>2,610,950</u>

17 Related party transactions

Transactions between related parties are on normal commercial terms and conditions no more favourable than those available to other parties unless otherwise stated.

18 Transactions with key management personnel

Key management within the Company are the members of the Executive. Compared to 2016 there was one less position on the Executive from the last quarter of 2017 with a member resigned and not replaced within the context of an Executive re-structure. A team of eight staff continued to fulfill the Executive roles.

Key management personnel remuneration includes the following expenses:	2017	2016
	\$	\$
Total key management personnel remuneration	<u>1,723,628</u>	<u>1,789,583</u>

The Board of Directors of Aspect receive no remuneration.

19 Events subsequent to the reporting 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 Aspect to affect significantly the operations of Aspect, the results of the operations, or the state of affairs of Aspect, in subsequent financial years.

Responsible Entities' Declaration

In the opinion of the Responsible Entities of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect):

- a. The financial statements and notes of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) are in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:
 - i. giving a true and fair view of its financial position as at 31 December 2017 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date; and
 - ii. complying with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*, and
- b. There are reasonable grounds to believe that Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

The Responsible Entities are the members of the Board of Directors. This declaration is signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors:



Chair of the Board
Julie Hamblin

Dated this 23rd day of March 2018

Declaration by Chief Executive Officer

Declaration by Chief Executive Officer in respect of fundraising appeals

Opinion

I, Adrian Ford, Chief Executive Officer of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) declare, in my opinion:

- a. the financial statements give a true and fair view of all income and expenditure of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) with respect to fundraising appeal activities for the financial year ended 31 December 2017;
- b. the statement of financial position gives a true and fair view of the state of affairs with respect to fundraising appeal activities as at 31 December 2017;
- c. the provisions of the *Charitable Fundraising Act 1991*, the Regulations under that Act and the conditions attached to the authority have been complied with during the period from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017; and
- d. the internal controls exercised by Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) are appropriate and effective in accounting for all income received and applied from any fundraising appeals



Adrian Ford
Chief Executive Officer

Dated this 23rd day of March 2018

Independent Auditor's report



Level 17, 383 Kent Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Correspondence to:
Locked Bag Q800
QVB Post Office
Sydney NSW 1230

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

Independent auditor's report to the members of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Auditor's Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial report of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) (the "Company"), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2017, and the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies and the directors' declaration.

In our opinion, the financial report of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect):

1. has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* ("ACNC Act"), including:
 - a. giving a true and fair view of the Company's financial position as at 31 December 2017 and of its financial performance for the year then ended;
 - b. complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.
2. is in accordance with the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 ("the Act") and the Charitable Fundraising Regulation 2015 (the "Regulation"), including showing a true and fair view of the Company's financial result of fundraising appeals for the year ended 31 December 2017.

Basis for Auditor's Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report.

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

Responsibilities of the Directors for the Financial Report

The Directors of the Company are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure

Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd ACN 130 913 594
a subsidiary or related entity of Grant Thornton Australia Ltd ABN 41 127 556 389

'Grant Thornton' refers to the brand under which the Grant Thornton member firms provide assurance, tax and advisory services to their clients and/or refers to one or more member firms, as the context requires. Grant Thornton Australia Ltd is a member firm of Grant Thornton International Ltd (GTIL). GTIL and the member firms are not a worldwide partnership. GTIL and each member firm is a separate legal entity. Services are delivered by the member firms. GTIL does not provide services to clients. GTIL and its member firms are not agents of, and do not obligate one another and are not liable for one another's acts or omissions. In the Australian context only, the use of the term 'Grant Thornton' may refer to Grant Thornton Australia Limited ABN 41 127 556 389 and its Australian subsidiaries and related entities. GTIL is not an Australian related entity to Grant Thornton Australia Limited.

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.

Requirements and the ACNC Act, and for such internal control as the Directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the Directors are responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Directors either intend to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Company's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

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

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at:

http://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Report on the requirements of the NSW Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and the NSW Charitable Fundraising Regulation 2015

We have audited the compliance of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) (the "Company") with the requirements of Section 24(2) of the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 for the year ended 31 December 2017.

Our Opinion

In our opinion:

- a Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) has properly kept the accounts and associated records during the year ended 31 December 2017 in accordance with the NSW Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and NSW Charitable Fundraising Regulations 2015 (section 24(2)(b) of the Act); and
- b the Company, has, in all material respects, properly accounted for and applied money received as a result of fundraising appeals conducted during the year ended 31 December 2017 in accordance with section 24(2)(c) of the Act; and
- c there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due over the 12 month period from the date of this report (section 24(2)(d) of the Act).

Responsibilities of the Directors under the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991

The Directors of the Company are responsible for compliance with the requirements and conditions of the NSW Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and NSW Charitable Fundraising Regulation 2015 and for such internal control as the Directors determine is necessary for compliance with the Act and the Regulation. This responsibility includes establishing and maintaining internal control over the conduct of all fundraising appeals; ensuring all assets



obtained during, or as a result of, a fundraising appeal are safeguarded and properly accounted for; and maintaining proper books of account and records.

The Directors are also responsible for ensuring the Company will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to form and express an opinion on the Company's compliance, in all material respects, with the requirements of the Act and Regulation, as specified in section 24(2)(b), 24(2)(c) and 24(2)(d) of the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991.

Our audit has been conducted in accordance with the applicable Standards on Assurance Engagements (ASAE 3100 *Compliance Engagements*), issued by the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board. Our audit has been conducted to provide reasonable assurance that Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) has complied with specific requirements of the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and Charitable Fundraising Regulation 2015, and whether there are reasonable grounds to believe the Company will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due over the 12 month period from the date of this independent auditor's report (future debts).

Audit procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement. The auditor designs procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances and incorporate the audit scope requirements set out in the Act. The audit procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion on compliance of that Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) with the Act and Regulations and its ability to pay future debts. Audit procedures include obtaining an understanding of the internal control structure for fundraising appeal activities and examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the Company's compliance with specific requirements of the Act and Regulation, and assessing the reasonableness and appropriateness of the Company's assessment regarding the Company's ability to pay future debts.

Inherent Limitations

Because of the inherent limitations of any compliance procedures, it is possible that fraud, error or noncompliance may occur and not be detected. An audit is not designed to detect all instances of noncompliance with the requirements of the Act and Regulation, as the audit procedures are not performed continuously throughout the year and are undertaken on a test basis.

Whilst evidence is available to support the Company's ability to pay future debts, such evidence is future orientated and speculative in nature. As a consequence, actual results are likely to be different from the information on which the opinion is based, since anticipated events frequently do not occur as expected or assumed and the variations between the prospective opinion and the actual outcome may be significant.

A stylized, handwritten-style signature of "Grant Thornton" in purple ink.

Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd
Chartered Accountants

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "C F Farley".

C F Farley
Partner – Audit & Assurance
Sydney, 23 March 2018



Australia Pacific Autism Conference 2017; Adrian Ford & International Keynote Speaker, Dr Barry Prizant



Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)

ABN 12 000 637 267

Building 1, Level 2,
14 Aquatic Drive, Frenchs Forest NSW 2086
PO Box 361, Forestville NSW 2087

T 1800 ASPECT (1800 277 328)

E customerservice@autismspectrum.org.au

W autismspectrum.org.au