



## 44th Annual Report



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Autism Spectrum Australia (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 and Victorian fundraising registration number 10688.

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**Annual General Meeting:** Our Annual General Meeting will be held at the State Library of NSW on 22 May 2013 at 2.30 pm.

Our front cover features Lisa and her sons Bradley and Nathan. See page 9 to read their story. We would like to thank all of the people featured for their permission to use their photos throughout this report.

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 this 44th annual report, we have reduced our impact on the environment by making sure it can be downloaded in full from our website with a limited number of copies available in print.



# About Aspect

## Vision

The best opportunities for people with autism or other disabilities

## Mission

We deliver person-centred solutions by providing flexible, responsive and evidence-informed services

## Values

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

### People

- People come first
- We value working together
- We celebrate diversity
- We revel in uniqueness

### Positive

- We are optimistic
- We focus on strengths
- We have a can-do attitude
- We are encouraging

### Possible

- We aspire to greater things
- We encourage people to dream
- We seek opportunities
- We are future focused

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) is one of Australia's leading not-for-profit service providers, helping people with autism and other disabilities and their families since 1966.

Aspect's evidence-informed approach is designed to give people the opportunity to be the best they can be. Potential varies enormously for every individual, which makes the role Aspect plays all the more rewarding.

Our services provide the best opportunities for people with autism or other disabilities, as well as providing much needed support to their families, carers, friends and colleagues.

# Message from the Chair of our Board & CEO

**We had an exciting and eventful 2012, reaching more people than ever before within a fast changing political environment for the disability and education sectors. Our 44th Annual Report is an opportunity to pay homage to our many supporters, to review our strategic direction and to reflect on our achievements for the year.**

Since the 43rd Annual Report the Australian Government passed legislation for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) – to be known as DisabilityCare Australia.

This has wide-ranging implications for Aspect and other disability service providers. It is predicted that when the NDIS is fully implemented, funding for disability is likely to grow significantly.

Importantly, funding will be mainly offered through individual funding packages to the person with a disability rather than through block funding to service providers such as Aspect.

Aspect has embraced the opportunity to acknowledge the rights of people with a disability and to develop a shared vision for a person-centred system as reflected in the report 'Living Life My Way'.

The new funding model's person-centred approach will build on our own philosophy of being person-centred and family-focused by allowing people to choose which services they access based on their own wants and needs.

Of course change comes with its challenges. With an NDIS, service providers in the disability sector will each be competing in a newly established market place for people with a disability – open to all providers, and probably including commercial organisations.

Along with changes in the disability sector, major funding reforms for education are also on the agenda of the Australian Government as a result of the Gonski Report.

As the Annual Report goes to print, Aspect is closely monitoring developments and has been heavily engaged in discussions with the education sector while these reforms are being considered.

At Aspect we have been working hard to ensure we are ready for the implementation of NDIS. In 2012 we invested in new change management strategies, re-wrote our vision, mission and values, introduced a new brand and corporate identity, and continued to refine our back office operations.

Our strategic focus is on growing our services in NSW, Victoria and the ACT along with any national opportunities that might emerge.

**At the forefront of all this activity was our continued focus on serving people with an autism spectrum disorder and other disabilities, and their families.**

We were also thrilled to open the Aspect Hunter School and Resource Centre, the largest capital development in our history since the Aspect Vern Barnett School opened in 1971.

Aspect was the lead agency of the national consortium that won the \$20m tender for the second phase of Positive Partnerships – a national program over four years to support school aged students with an ASD through the training and support of educators, and parents and carers of children with an ASD, in their communities.

At the forefront of all this activity was our continued focus on serving people with an autism spectrum disorder and other disabilities, and their families.

During 2012 we were in contact with a record 10,004 people with an ASD. We received more donations than ever before – \$4.82m gross, and our financial position remained strong with a surplus of \$4.00m.

We cannot thank our donors and supporters enough for their generosity. We would also like to personally thank the Australian, NSW and Victorian Governments; the Aspect Board for their continued governance and clarity of direction; our Executive and Management Team and, of course, our people – the staff and volunteers who are so committed to make a difference to the lives of people with an ASD or other disabilities and their families.

**Aspect has embraced the opportunity to acknowledge the rights of people with a disability and develop a shared vision for a person-centred system...**



Jenny Young  
Chair of the Aspect Board



Adrian Ford  
Chief Executive Officer



# Disability in Australia

In an Australian population of a little over 22 million people, more than 4 million or 20% of people have a disability. A disability is any condition that restricts a person's mental, sensory or mobility functions. It could be caused by accident, trauma, genetics or disease.

A disability may be temporary or permanent, total or partial, lifelong or acquired, visible or invisible.

**1 in 5**  
people have a disability

**2.1 million**  
Australians of working age  
(15-64yrs) have a disability

Almost **90%**  
of disabilities are  
not visible

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is the fastest growing developmental condition in the western world. There is no typical case and there is no accepted cure. Fifty years ago it was considered rare, affecting one in 10,000 children. Now the number of children being diagnosed with an ASD in Australia is one in 100 and rising.

Approximately 2.5 million people reported providing informal care to a person because of a disability or old age. Of these 2.5 million people, approximately 20% (or 474,600 people), reported being the primary carer of a person with a disability. Of these carers, 187,500 (40%) had a disability themselves.

**1 in  
100**  
people will  
have an ASD

**Every  
4 hrs** an Australian child is  
diagnosed with an ASD

**Over  
43,000** children are  
diagnosed  
with an ASD

**2.5 million** carers

Over  
**400,000**  
people are primary carers

Over  
**187,000**  
carers have a disability

Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC) conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) throughout Australia



**Autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) are lifelong developmental disabilities characterised by marked difficulties in social interaction, impaired communication, restricted and repetitive interests and behaviours and sensory sensitivities.**

**The word 'spectrum' is used because the range and severity of the difficulties people with an ASD experience can vary widely. Sometimes the word "autism" is used to refer to all ASDs. Research shows that about 1 in 100 children, almost 230,000 Australians, have an ASD and that it is more prevalent in boys than girls.**



**The past year was hugely successful in a number of areas. We reached more people than ever before through our work with families, in schools and our increased online presence. We increased our profile across Australia through our work with national projects, increased media coverage and our commitment to work with local communities particularly in rural and remote areas. And we continued to work in partnership with stakeholders to attract funding and support to improve outcomes for individuals and families. Here is just a snapshot of some of the significant highlights that occurred in 2012.**

# Highlights from 2012

## OUR REACH

**10,004**  
people reached

**66**  
service  
locations

**125**  
service partners

During the year we had direct contact with more people than ever before, supporting more than 10,000 people with an autism spectrum disorder or other disabilities and their families.

## SERVICES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

**847** children accessed early intervention services in NSW, ACT and Victoria

As well, the Early Childhood Development Program, funded by Ageing, Disability and Home Care, Department of Family and Community Services NSW, helps young children aged 0-6 who have not, or not yet, been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. It includes community education, early screening, early support and transition support.

**116** children assessed through the Riverina and Macarthur Early Childhood Development Program

We secured \$300k over three years in funding from the Greater Charitable Foundation for the Early Intervention Readiness Program in the Hunter to support newly diagnosed children on the autism spectrum and their families.

## ENQUIRIES

**5,644** calls handled by Aspect Information Line (AIL)

In June the 1800 Aspect phone number and interactive voice recording system went live, and in December we began outbound direct marketing (emails and follow up calls) to follow up these contacts. This transformed AIL from a passive information service to a dynamic, client facing service, supporting individuals and families to access Aspect services.

**2,189** NSW Autism Advisor Program appointments with families

## ASPECT POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT

**630**  
people participated in Positive Behaviour Support programs

Aspect Positive Behaviour Support includes service users through Aspect Behaviour Intervention Service, Aspect Adolescent Support and Aspect Recipe for Success.

## ASPECT VICTORIA

Aspect's early intervention work continued to grow and we also launched a new positive behaviour support leadership program funded by the Victorian Government, providing Aspect with a footprint from which to develop other programs across the state. In 2012 we appointed a service coordinator to lead the Helping Children with Autism early intervention in Victoria.

# Highlights from 2012

(continued)

## REACHING MORE CHILDREN THROUGH EDUCATION

**878**

students  
enrolled at  
Aspect schools

**93**

satellite classes  
operated by  
Aspect schools

**134**

students from Aspect  
schools transitioned to more  
mainstream environments

On 14 November 2012, Chair of the Aspect Board Jenny Young, opened our new Aspect Hunter School and Resource Centre in Thornton, NSW.

For the first time in 30 years, the Aspect school in the Hunter is brand new and purpose built on land given to Aspect by Richard Owens. The build was supported by the Australian Government, the NSW Government and extraordinary community support led by Hilton Gruegen AM.

**286**

consultations by  
Educational  
Outreach to  
students, families  
and teachers

**977**

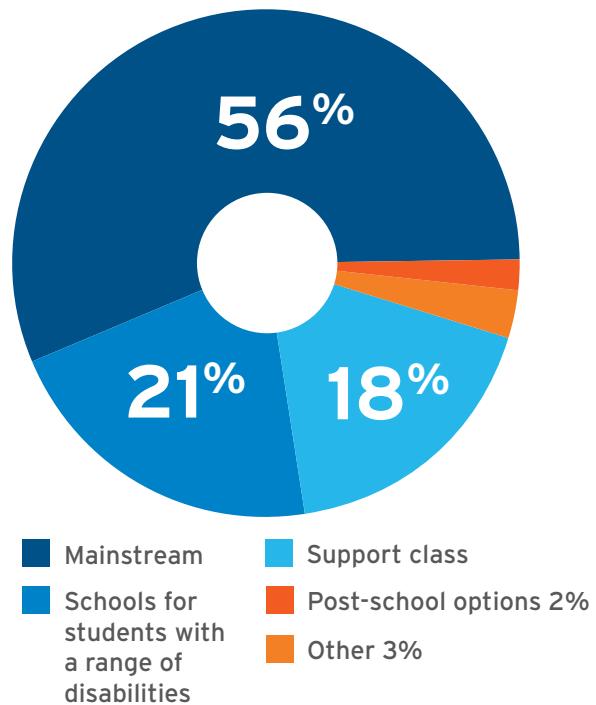
teachers from  
mainstream schools  
received Educational  
Outreach training

Aspect opened satellite classes at three new sites - St John the Evangelist, Campbelltown (Aspect Macarthur School), St Mary's Star of the Sea, Hurstville (Aspect South East Sydney School) and Barrack Heights Public School, Barrack Heights (Aspect South Coast School)

Each Aspect school now has an Educational Outreach (EO) team with at least two staff trained in delivering the range of EO services in mainstream schools.

The EO team also developed a range of other service models including the Visiting Teacher Autism (VTA), Specialist Teacher in Residence (STiR) and targeted regional support through a number of Memorandum of Understanding agreements.

### Where students transitioned to



## WE BELONG

A national first, the 'We Belong' project assessed the results of more than 500 questionnaires and was used to generate a series of recommendations that have been reported to government about the experiences, needs and aspirations of adults with high functioning autism (HFA) or Asperger's disorder. A \$50,000 grant from the NSW State Government was earmarked for a micro-site to address the issues identified in the report.

**500** questionnaires used to  
generate recommendations

# Meet Nathan & Bradley



**Nathan, 8, and Bradley, 4, are brothers who attend an Aspect School. Nathan is in a satellite class and Bradley is in pre-Kindy.**

Aspect's early intervention program provided tailored support weekly and enabled Bradley to increase his language and social skills which were a great help in the classroom and on the playground. His mum, Lisa was also active in the program and learnt new skills to encourage Bradley's continued development through play and ongoing support.

"It has made a huge difference," said Lisa. "There's a lot of one-on-one time to focus on areas of need." Now Lisa receives the support and guidance she needs to help her boys and to look after herself, while her sons receive the specialist support they need to grow and develop.

"I can't tell you how much the support of Aspect means to me. Every bit of advice and every session the kids go to, makes so much difference," she said.

## Meet Thomas



Thomas, who has Asperger's syndrome, gained the confidence and assurance he needed to make friends and be active through the Aspect Adult Social Group. He now uses his experiences to help others better understand what it is like to live with an autism spectrum disorder.

"I have worked hard to know what social cues and facial expressions mean. I can help young people with Asperger's so that their lives are more fulfilling and they are not left feeling isolated," he said. "I mentor my fellow Aspies on how one needs to behave in certain situations, on body language and talking socially."

Despite early challenges, including being bullied at school, Thomas today is positive, resilient and has a willingness to succeed. In 2012 he was a media spokesperson for Aspect about the findings from We Belong. Thomas says it can be very difficult for someone with Asperger's to find employment without support.

His dream is to work in television production or perhaps to create his own cartoons.

# Highlights from 2012

(continued)

## COMMITMENT TO RESEARCH FOR PEOPLE WITH AN ASD

**8**

research projects completed

(available on our website)

**4**

research journal articles submitted

**1** our first book was published - *A Practical Guide for Teachers of Students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder in Secondary Education*

**83**

participants at our fourth annual Research Forum

Aspect was one of twelve Essential Participants in the successful bid for a Cooperative Research Centre, 'Living with Autism'. It will provide \$104m of funding over eight years. It is due to commence on 1 July 2013.

## SUPPORTING ADULTS ON THE SPECTRUM

**75**

adults with a disability participated in the Community Participation projects

We secured funding to expand the Adult Social Group using a more self-managed model with coordinator support. We also found a new location for the Bexley and Allawah Community Participation programs in Hurstville.

**80**

adults with a disability attended at least one Social Group function

## ANNUAL RECOGNITION AWARDS

The NSW Annual Autism Recognition Awards were an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of some of our friends and supporters in the autism community.

**5**

NSW Recognition Awards presented

We acknowledged:

- Everett Leeson, Individual Achievement Award, for the exceptional work he did working on Aspect's research project, We Belong
- Catherine Sakey, Parent Carer Award, recognised for her efforts in caring for two children with autism and in her inspirational support of others in her local community
- Julie Hook, Professional Achievement Award, for exceptional professional contribution as the former Director of Positive Partnerships
- Hilton Grugeon AM and Richard Owens Investments Pty Ltd, Patronage and Partnership Award, for outstanding support in helping to build the new Aspect Hunter School and Resource Centre
- Mike Eden and Karena Leet, David Foster Award for Volunteer Service, for their fundraising and promotion of autism awareness in the Riverina region

## OUR PROFILE

**1,401**

positive media mentions

As well as seeking and responding to media opportunities throughout the year, we were particularly successful in leveraging Autism Month in April to further raise our profile and to generally raise awareness about autism.

**14,859**  
social media supporters

**314,739**

visitors to the website for the year

# Our locations

## SYDNEY AND SURROUNDS



### Bexley

Aspect Bexley Adult Program

### Canterbury

Aspect Canterbury Adult Program

### Cobbitty

Aspect Macarthur School with satellite classes in:

- |               |                |               |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| ● Alstonville | ● Campbelltown | ● Holsworthy  |
| ● Minto       | ● Mullumbimby  | ● West Hoxton |

### Forestville

Aspect Vern Barnett School with satellite classes in:

- |            |               |             |
|------------|---------------|-------------|
| ● Eastwood | ● Forestville | ● Lane Cove |
| ● St Ives  | ● Mona Vale   |             |

### Frenchs Forest

Central Office

Aspect Adult Programs

Aspect Autism Infoline

Aspect Behaviour Support

Aspect Building Blocks Early Intervention

Aspect Diagnostic & Assessment Service

Aspect Early Days workshops

Aspect Someone To Turn To

### Frenchs Forest (continued)

Aspect's Social Clubs & ASteen  
Autism Advisor Program in NSW  
Positive Partnerships

### Lane Cove

Aspect Siblings Camp

### South Peakhurst

Aspect South East Sydney School with satellite classes in:

- |               |                |                   |
|---------------|----------------|-------------------|
| ● Belfield    | ● Hurstville   | ● Kareela         |
| ● Kirrawee    | ● Leichhardt   | ● Maroubra        |
| ● Menai       | ● Regents Park | ● South Caringbah |
| ● Surry Hills |                |                   |

### Prospect

Aspect Education & Research

### Ryde

Aspect Ryde Adult Program

### Wetherill Park

Aspect Western Sydney School with satellite classes in:

- |              |                  |              |
|--------------|------------------|--------------|
| ● Blacktown  | ● Fairfield West | ● Marayong   |
| ● Richmond   | ● Schofields     | ● Smithfield |
| ● Springwood |                  |              |

We provide services to people who have an ASD or other disability and their families from 66 locations in NSW, Victoria and the ACT. Our services are delivered or based in the following broad geographical areas:



#### ACT

Canberra (Cook)

- Aspect Building Blocks Early Intervention

#### Terrigal

Aspect Central Coast School with satellite classes in:

- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| • East Gosford | • Lake Munmorah |
| • Noraville    | • Tuggerah      |
| • Wamberal     | • Woy Woy South |

#### Thornton

Aspect Hunter School with satellite classes in:

- |            |                  |
|------------|------------------|
| • Abermain | • Belmont        |
| • Cardiff  | • Port Macquarie |
| • Tarro    | • Waratah West   |

#### Corrimal

Aspect South Coast School with satellite classes in:

- |                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| • Barrack Heights  | • Fairy Meadow |
| • North Wollongong | • Tullimbar    |

#### Albury

Aspect Riverina School with satellite classes in:

- |          |                           |
|----------|---------------------------|
| • Albury | • Kooringal (Wagga Wagga) |
|----------|---------------------------|

#### Alstonville

Aspect Far North Coast Centre

#### VICTORIA

Melbourne (Moonee Ponds)

- Aspect Victoria

# Strategic Plan 2013-2015

**Our strategic plan charts the key directions for Aspect over the coming three years.  
It is a rolling plan that we review every year.**

The strategic plan determines how we engage and respond to our stakeholders, while delivering the high standards of excellence and innovation they expect.

Our plan focusses on four key issues:

- Have piercing clarity about Aspect's purpose and vision
- Put the people we support at the centre and have highly responsive services
- Safeguard our relationship with the ASD community
- Succeed in a highly competitive environment

Our external key stakeholders are:

1. The people Aspect supports
2. People with an ASD and their families
3. Government departments
4. Donors and supporters

Our internal key stakeholders are:

1. Aspect's members
2. Aspect's staff

## Strategic Plan 2013 - 2015

In preparing our plan we actively engage with our key stakeholders to identify those strategies that ensure we meet their expectations. By succeeding in this task, Aspect gains competitive advantage. As well, we set an objective with each key stakeholder which in turn identifies what Aspect wants from them. Below is our strategic plan for 2013-2015 according to each of our stakeholders.

### EXTERNAL KEY STAKEHOLDERS

#### 1. The People Aspect Supports

##### Strategies

- The people Aspect supports want Aspect to put them at the centre of everything we do – relationships, services, systems
- They want Aspect's services to be responsive and flexible
- They want Aspect to offer value for money for our services by ensuring they are appropriately priced against the market
- They want Aspect to identify new programs and sectors for people with disabilities and their families
- They want Aspect to support the inclusion of people with other disabilities and their families into the community so that they have the same opportunities as others

##### Objective

Aspect wants the people we support to choose Aspect's services because they meet their wants and needs

#### 2. People with an ASD and their Families

##### Strategies

- People with an ASD and their families want Aspect to continue to be a specialist provider of autism services
- They want to be able to interact with Aspect
- They want Aspect to be a systemic advocate in the field of ASD
- They want Aspect to increase public awareness about ASD
- They want Aspect to be a knowledge leader in the field of ASD and to develop new knowledge through its research and evaluation activities

##### Objective

Aspect wants to safeguard its special relationship with the ASD community

### 3. Government Departments

#### Strategies

- Government departments want Aspect to adopt person-centred practices and individualised community services
- They want Aspect to provide and promote social inclusion for people with an ASD or other disabilities

#### Objective

Aspect wants government departments to engage with and invest in Aspect at regional, state and national levels

### 4. Donors and Supporters

#### Strategies

- Donors and supporters want Aspect to engage and value their contributions
- They want to know from Aspect that they are making a difference to people with an ASD and their families
- They want to know that Aspect is a credible and trustworthy organisation

#### Objective

Aspect wants its donors and supporters to give generously, both financially and in-kind, to Aspect

## INTERNAL KEY STAKEHOLDERS

### 1. Aspect's Members

#### Strategies

- Aspect's members want Aspect to have piercing clarity about its purpose and vision
- They want Aspect to give them a sense of belonging, inclusion or involvement with the organisation

#### Objective

Aspect wants its Members to support the continued development of Aspect

### 2. Aspect's Staff

#### Strategies

- Aspect's staff want to continue to build their confidence in all people with leadership roles in Aspect
- They want Aspect to further improve its performance on work health & safety (WHS) by supporting Aspect's work health and safety program
- They want Aspect to provide opportunities for career development in Aspect
- They want Aspect to improve Aspect's building stock and equipment

#### Objective

Aspect wants staff to put the people they support at the centre of their work and be highly responsive

# Our corporate memberships



## positive partnerships

Supporting school age students on the autism spectrum

**Positive Partnerships is auspiced by a consortium, Partnerships in Education and the Autism Community, of which Aspect is the lead agency. The other members are Autism SA, Autism Queensland and Flinders University.**

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) committed to further funding the Positive Partnerships program. Since the program was reinstated in 2012, Positive Partnerships had increased the numbers of participants in the parent/carer workshops from diverse communities and cultural backgrounds. Positive Partnerships also included teacher assistants in selected professional development workshops for the first time. Importantly, it achieved the contract numbers required by the DEEWR.

### **In 2012 the parent/carer workshops Positive Partnerships had:**

**58** participants from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities

**77** participants from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

**67** grandparents

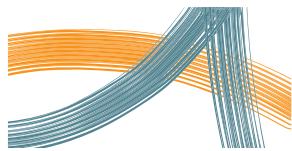
**125** local community members supporting partners and carers

**437**

teachers, school leaders and other staff accessed the professional development component

**1,194**

parents, carers and extended family and community accessed the parent/carer component



## Australian Advisory Board on Autism Spectrum Disorders

ACN 085 018 408

**We are a corporate member of the Australian Advisory Board on Autism Spectrum Disorders, the national peak body representing people who have an ASD, their families, carers and helpers. Through its member organisations, including Aspect, the Advisory Board represents more than 25,000 people who live with an ASD and who are themselves members of, or who obtain services from, the Advisory Board's member organisations.**

**25,000**  
people with an ASD represented  
by the Advisory Board

There are many more people who have an ASD (often accompanying other conditions) but whose needs are met either privately or through other disability programs.

The focus of the Advisory Board is working with Australian Government to develop appropriate policies for the people we represent, providing information about ASDs and working with the Australian ASD community to build skills.

We are represented on the Australian Advisory Board on Autism Spectrum Disorders by our CEO, Adrian Ford, who is the Board's Treasurer and a former Chairperson.

### 2012 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2011-12

The Australian Advisory Board on Autism Spectrum Disorders is the national peak body representing the autism spectrum community. Through its members, the Advisory Board represents a significant number of Australian citizens who live with an ASD and who are members of, or who obtain services from, the Advisory Board's member organisations.

During the reporting period, there have been significant developments in the reform of the disability sector and the not-for-profit sector.

The Board has been active in advancing our key strategic directions and endeavouring to lead and influence reform developments to ensure better life outcomes for people living with an autism spectrum disorder and their families.

The key priorities for the Board in 2011-12 have focused on the following key areas:

- Raising Awareness – through key activities associated with Autism Month and the Asia Pacific Autism Conference
- Influencing Policy – through the development of position papers, meeting with politicians and key decision makers, particularly in relation to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
- Developing Relationships – with key stakeholders through effective communications and representation on relevant industry groups and initiatives.

# Our corporate membership (continued)

## Raising Awareness

- The Asia Pacific Autism Conference (APAC) 2011 was a significant and key event during the financial year. APAC 2011, held in Perth from the 8-10 September 2011, was jointly hosted by the Autism Association of Western Australia and the Advisory Board.

One thousand three hundred and ninety delegates (1,390) attended APAC 11 with twenty two (22) countries represented.

The Conference gained prominent national and international media exposure including:

- a front page of The Australian newspaper
- a featured story on "AM", ABC
- a featured story on ABC News
- a featured story on Ten's national News at Five
- evening news in all capital cities
- Fox News (USA, South America) and Indian Express.

Evaluation survey results indicated that 89% of the delegates rated the Conference as Excellent to Above Average. The Board pass on our congratulations to Joan McKenna Kerr and the Autism Association of Western Australia for delivering a highly successful event.

- The Board and its member organisations were active during Autism Month May 2012. Many organisation now participate in the international "Light it up Blue" awareness campaign.

## Influencing Policy

In budget announcements in May 2012, the Australian Government displayed great leadership in embracing the recommendations of the Productivity Commission Report and committed \$1 billion over the next four years (from July 2012) to ensure the effective implementation of the NDIS. The NDIS launch sites were announced following COAG's Select Council on Disability Reform meeting in July. The launch sites will operate in NSW, Victoria and the ACT on a specific geographical region; those in SA and Tasmania will be based on an age cohort. South Australia will focus on children, commencing with 0-5 years, expanding to 0-14 years. Tasmania will focus on young people 15-24 years.

It is critical that the unique and complex characteristics of ASD be considered within all elements of the design and development of the NDIS to ensure that families

and individuals experience a service response that improves life outcomes. In particular the Board has identified the following focus areas:

- The functional assessment of people with an ASD must reflect the unique nature of the disability and ensure access to services that is appropriate to these specific needs
- Families and individuals with an ASD need specific support and resources to navigate the service system
- All people and organisations delivering services to the autism spectrum community must be skilled, competent and trained in the unique supports and interventions required to ensure the best possible outcomes
- The NDIS must support a mechanism for the continued capacity building of autism expertise across Australia
- All people with an ASD in regional and remote locations must receive a level of service that is of commensurate in quantity and quality to that received in metropolitan locations.

The Board also updated the "National Call to Action" and the position paper on "Education and Autism Spectrum Disorders in Australia".

Towards the end of the 2011-12 financial year, the Board was successful in securing project funding from the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

The Advisory Board has developed strong relationships over many years and is pleased that there has been recognition of the Board's activities and expertise. The funding will allow the Board to undertake two key projects throughout the 2012-13 financial year:

- Development of a discussion paper with a focus on children and young people with an autism spectrum disorder under the age of 25, highlighting the key issues regarding the level of interface between the disability sector and the health sector, in particular mental health. The paper will provide recommendations on ways in which the service system can be better streamlined, integrated and provide a more comprehensive response for people with an ASD and co-morbid health issues

- Development and promotion of guidelines with a focus on children and young people with an ASD under the age of 25 which are aimed at helping parents and carers of a child with an ASD better understand the assistance that may be available to them. The guidelines will provide information on how to develop individualised service plans as well as key points that parents and carers should consider when choosing interventions and support that are best suited to the needs of their child with an ASD. Specific guidelines will also be developed for professionals.

### **Developing Relationships**

A significant development throughout the year has been the appointment of two additional Directors. Professor Jacqui Roberts (Chair, Autism Centre of Excellence, Griffith University, Queensland) and Professor Katrina Williams (Director, Developmental Medicine, Royal Children's Hospital, Victoria) have added great value to the Board in relation to a greater connection with the research and clinical communities of interest for Autism Spectrum Disorders.

The Board has continued meetings with key policy and decision makers from relevant Departments and key Ministers. Throughout the year, two meetings were held with Senator Jan McLucas (or nominated representatives) and a meeting was also held with Senator Mitch Fifield.

The Board committed in-kind contributions to the Autism Cooperative Research Centre and is acknowledged as a non-essential partner in the second proposal that has been submitted.

The Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) program is an Australian Government initiative administered by the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research and provides an exciting opportunity for the autism community in Australia.

The Board worked with the Australasian Society for Autism Research (ASfAR) to ensure the transfer of responsibility for monitoring and allocating the Apex Trust Fund for Autism Research.

### **Governance**

During the reporting period, Manuel Duharte resigned from the position of Chief Executive Officer, Autism Tasmania and his role on the Advisory Board. After appropriate selection process, Andrea Brumby, as the new Chief Executive Officer of Autism Tasmania, was appointed to the Board.

The Board continued to self-fund secretariat support throughout the year. Scott Shepherd from Autism SA assisted in this role for most of the year before resigning to take up a position with the national "Positive Partnership" program.

As the success of the Asia Pacific Conference continues to grow, the Board also formalised a process for conference protocols and agreement arrangements between the host organisation and the Board.

I have signalled my intent to step down as Chair of the Advisory Board at this year's Annual General Meeting and would like to take the opportunity to thank my fellow directors for their support.

It is a critical time for the autism community and I trust that we will continue to be active in our key roles of national leadership and influence.

**Jon Martin**  
Chairperson

Australian Advisory Board on Autism Spectrum Disorders

# Meet Tyes



Tyes has an autism spectrum disorder. He and his family were involved with Aspect's Early Intervention Readiness Program (EIRP), before he started at an Aspect School. When Tyes was at pre-school, his family started to notice that he was not interacting with other children and was frequently unsettled. He didn't want to participate in any activities and this was a great cause of anxiety for Tyes and his family.

"Aspect has made a huge difference," said Tyes' grandma Shirley. "He is now much more settled. He is happy to go to school each day and when the car comes and picks him up he is waiting happily and greets the driver and some of the other children. He has also started to have other children over to play, and loves to have picnics and play in his cubby house."

"Our Aspect therapist has been a great help. She has taught us skills to help Tyes - like teaching him to sit at the table and eat. She helped us to get him into more of a routine and he is much happier," said Shirley.

Tyes is now learning to read and write, and his family hope he will go to the local primary school in the coming years.

# Our donors & supporters

We are so grateful to you all for your amazing generosity and the difference you have made. Without your support we simply could not provide many of the life changing services we offer to people with autism and their families.

In particular we are grateful for the tremendous community, parent and staff support that helped us to build the new Aspect Hunter School and Resource Centre. Hilton Grugeon of Hunter Land, Richard Owens of Richard Owens Investments (ROI) and Peter Drayton of Drayton Construction, as well as many other generous contributors, made this possible.

- We received **\$4.82m** from our generous supporters
- We are indebted to the **14,856** people who supported us by making a donation during 2012
- Our Spectrum Friends circle made up of people who give to Aspect fortnightly or monthly grew by **72%**
- **474** individuals and groups fundraised for Aspect - taking on sponsored challenges, running, walking or swimming for Aspect, and holding their own events
- **34** registered clubs supported us with Club Grant funding
- We were privileged to receive significant support from **41** trusts and foundations and **58** companies
- David Epper and his team at Accident & Health successfully ran the **12th** annual Celebrity Golf Day
- Peter and Andrea Werner helped us ensure our **10th** annual Comedy Night was another fantastic event
- The Parents & Friends groups provided tremendous support to all of our schools
- We were indebted to the people who supported Aspect via a bequest in their Wills for the ongoing difference they make to people with autism

## Thank you to our Supporters

### Legacies

Estate of Arthur William Byrne  
Estate of Rachel Ginsburg  
Estate of Lily Edna Johnson  
Estate of William George Wilson Magill  
Estate of George Alistair Roberts  
Estate of Robert Henry Stokes

### Platinum Supporters

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Hunter Land  
Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation  
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The Hachem Group & Joe Hachem

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# Our donors & supporters (continued)

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 Tim Robinson  
 Rotary Club of Burwood  
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 The Shellharbour Club  
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 Tutt Bryant  
 Danny Vanderzalm  
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## Meet Alexandra



Alexandra has participated in the Aspect Adult Social Group's activities since early 2010 and takes a leading role in planning its annual calendar and activities. Since attending the group, she has made many friends, developed her social and communication skills and continues to maintain these friendships even outside of organised activities.

Having had a number of difficulties at school, Aspect has made a huge difference to Alexandra's adult life. "The impact that having Asperger's had on me during school was not fun, I used to cry myself to sleep, I would whinge and moan to my parents," said Alexandra. "Now thanks to Aspect everything is coming together and life is looking pretty good!"

Alexandra now works as an office attendant 4 days a week. She is a keen photographer and has displayed artwork at the Aspect Adult Program's art exhibition in both 2011 and 2012. She particularly enjoys photographing scenery around her home suburb of Tamarama.

# Our people

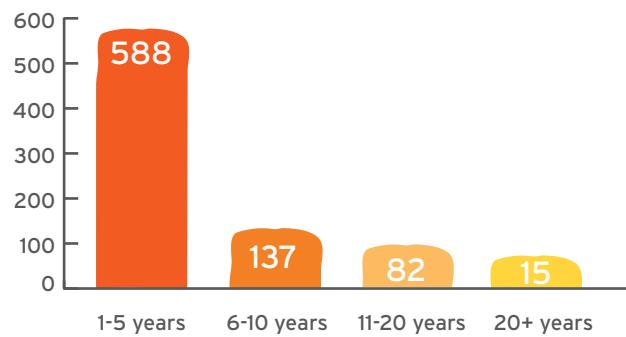
At Aspect we are passionate about people, about being positive and about what's possible. Along with this passion we know that people - their skills, capacity and commitment, are the key to our continued success. As an employer we are committed to working together to ensure the best possible opportunities for the communities in which we operate.

Total staff as of Nov 2012  
822 including casuals

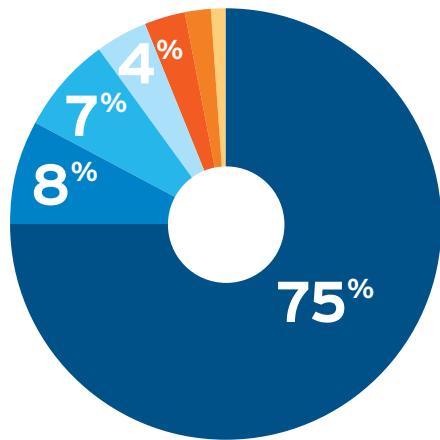


Gender split as of Nov 2012

Length of service of total staff as of Nov 2012

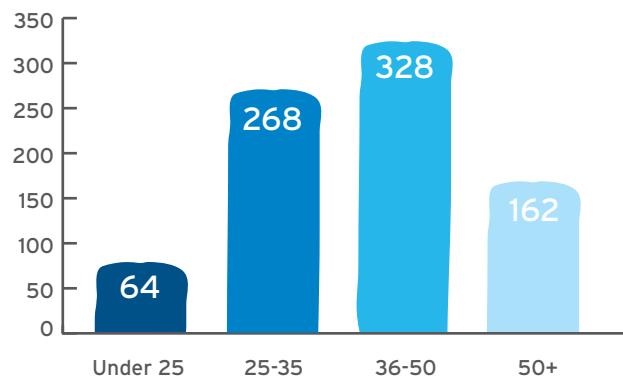


Where people work as a percentage of total (822) staff as of Nov 2012



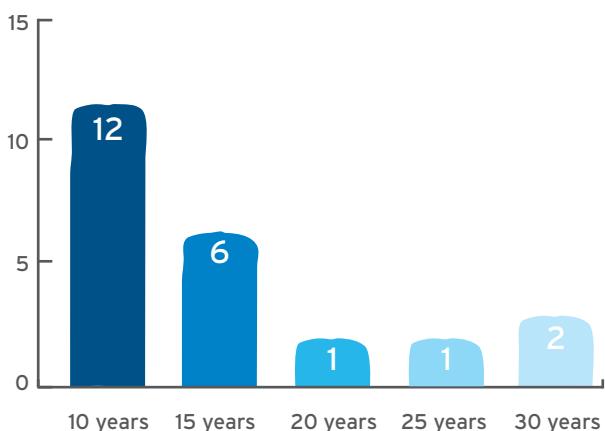
■ Education – 613
■ Early Intervention – 64
■ Administration – 58
■ Community Supports – 34
■ Advice and Information – 21 (2.5%)
■ Clinical Services – 19 (2.3%)
■ Positive Partnerships – 13 (1.6%)

Age range of staff as of 2012

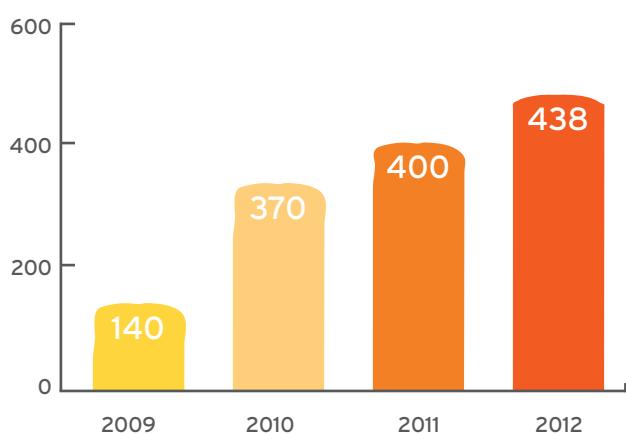


More than 500 Aspect staff celebrated diversity at our staff conference in Homebush

## Number of staff who reached long service milestones as at 31 March 2013



## 438 volunteers made a substantial impact to our services



## ELIZABETH HOYLES FELLOWSHIP

Each year, we award the Elizabeth Hoyles Fellowship, named after a former teacher at the Aspect Vern Barnett School, to one of our staff members, for research or a project which will benefit Aspect or the broader ASD community.

In 2012, Ellen Winchester, from Building Blocks and the Aspect South Coast School, was awarded the Elizabeth Hoyles Fellowship.

Ellen carried out research in the area of language acquisition, specifically Language Acquisition through Motor Planning (LAMP), and how assistive communication devices can be used for whole group activities.

## CHANGE MANAGEMENT

During 2012 we determined that a change management strategy was crucial to support our new strategic direction – putting people we support at the centre of everything we do – and to address upcoming government reforms.

These reforms to disability funding and provision would impact Aspect's operations and corporate support services and would likely have implications for the whole of Aspect.

Building on our resolve to strengthen our client focus, the change management project played a leading role in advancing the debate in understanding and responding to these substantive changes.

It was hugely successful as a conduit for information, a vehicle for change and a forum for discussion and exploration on the change issues impacting the organisation and individual teams.

## STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND COMMITMENT

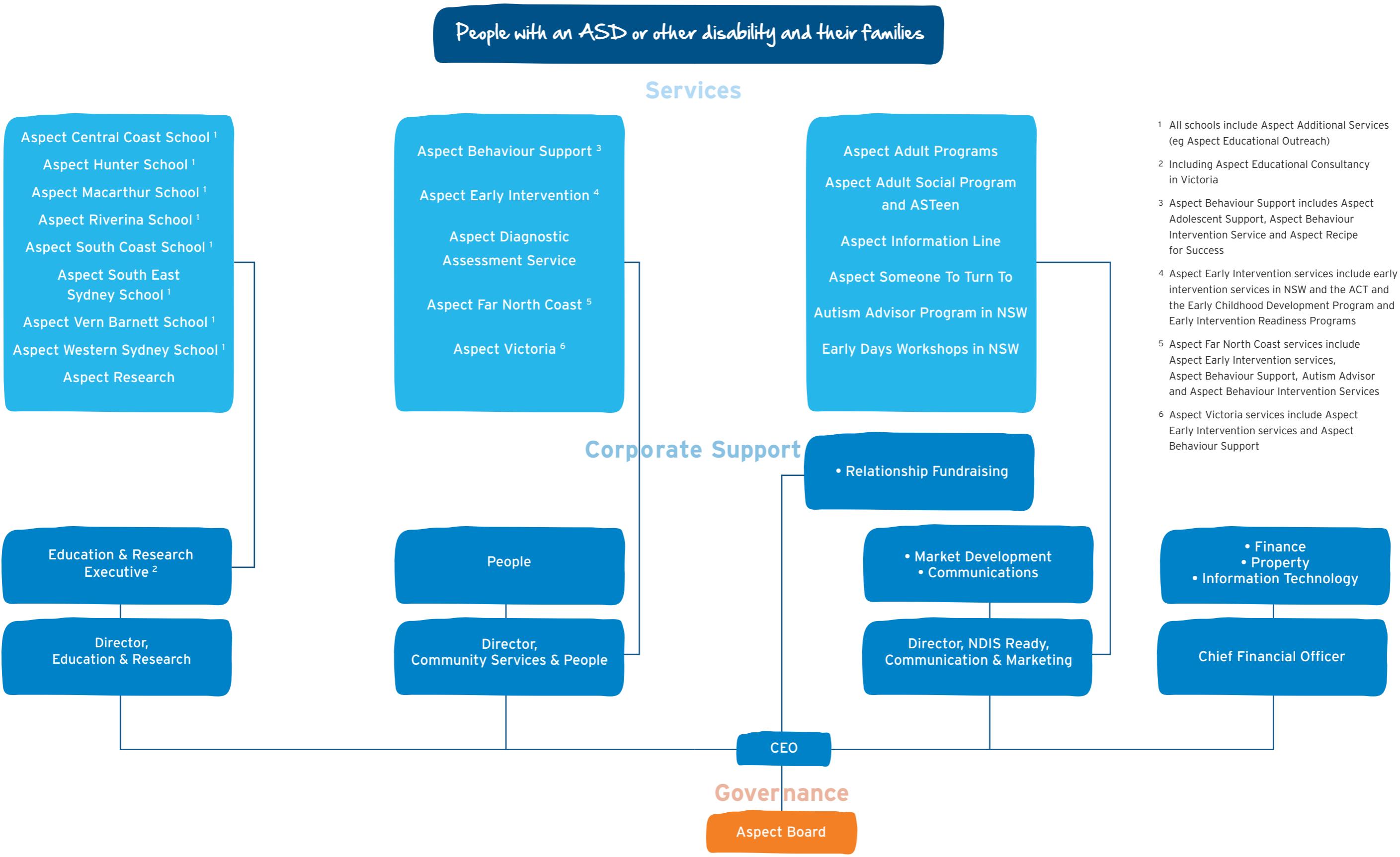
We were extremely pleased to complete and launch our Statement of Acknowledgement and Commitment recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples.

The statement acknowledges the cultural and spiritual links that the many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island nations have with the land, sea and environment and recognises the detrimental impact European settlement has had on the lives, land and lifestyles of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Peoples.

In our work we will seek out opportunities to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples and communities and continue to learn about their unique and rich cultures. The full statement can be found on our website.

# Organisation chart

(as at 30 April 2013)



# Governance Statement

**This is an extract from Aspect's Corporate Governance Statement. This extract outlines the key areas and responsibilities of the Board and Executive in setting the strategy and direction of Aspect and in managing and controlling the organisation. Please visit the Aspect website – autismsspectrum.org.au – for the full version of the Corporate Governance Statement.**

Aspect is a company limited by guarantee. It operates as a not-for-profit charity with the status of a public benevolent institution. It is governed by a constitution approved by its members.

## The Members

Membership of the company comprises three classes of members: Ordinary Members who pay a membership fee, Life Members and Life Governors. Aspect's Constitution provides that a Life Member is a person whom the Board from time to time determines to have given a sum of money or rendered a level of services in-kind to Aspect of such magnitude to be appointed as a Life Member of Aspect. Life Governors are referred to in the Aspect Constitution as persons that have given a sum of money or rendered a level of services in-kind to Aspect of significantly greater magnitude than a person who is eligible to become a Life Member and that the Board from time to time determines is worthy of a grant of Life Governorship.

## The Board

### Role of the Board

The Members may elect up to 10 persons to the Board of Aspect. The Aspect Constitution provides that Board may appoint up to two further persons as Directors of Aspect. The tenure of Board-appointed Directors expires at the next Board meeting to occur after every Annual General Meeting of the Company.

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

The Board determines the direction of Aspect and monitors Aspect's performance on behalf of its members and other stakeholders. It accomplishes this by:

- ensuring a skilled, effective and diverse Board with appropriate operating standards and procedures

- appointing, supporting, delegating to, evaluating and remunerating the Chief Executive Officer and providing for a management succession plan
- determining Aspect's vision, the strategic direction and objectives of Aspect in consultation with management
- ensuring sufficient resources are available for Aspect to achieve its goals by developing with management and approving Aspect's Strategic Plan, from which is developed Aspect's annual Action Plans and budget, and by regular monitoring of management's performance using the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) the plans and Aspect's operating and capital budgets
- advising, approving and monitoring management's activities and performance to ensure the Strategic Plan is met
- ensuring a risk management framework is in place to identify and manage those risks to ensure the preservation of Aspect's reputation, earnings, assets and capacity
- approving appropriate policies, guidelines and procedures and ensuring there is a compliance process in place to monitor adherence
- ensuring the integrity of internal controls for financial and management information systems
- maintaining adequate personal liability insurance for current and past Directors, and
- ensuring Aspect's activities are conducted ethically and transparently

The authorities retained by the Board are:

- the appointment, evaluation and remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer
- material transactions not in the ordinary course of business of Aspect
- the approval of the Strategic Plan and the operating and capital budgets
- the development, refinement and approval of Aspect's vision, mission and values
- preparing and approving Aspect's regulations
- approval of Aspect's statutory accounts including the Directors' report
- insurance policy renewals for Directors and Officers insurance
- ensuring appropriate performance of, and undertaking ongoing due diligence with, Aspect's external auditors

Aspect's activities are regulated by the Corporations Act 2001 and other state and federal laws as applicable.

## **Role of Management**

The Board delegates responsibility for day-to-day management of Aspect's activities to the Chief Executive Officer who is appointed by the Board and is responsible for implementing the Strategic Plan approved by the Board through Aspect's management team which he/she leads. Contractual, remuneration and other matters related to the Chief Executive Officer's appointment are reviewed by the Nomination & Remuneration Committee.

The Chair is the Board's principal formal contact with the Chief Executive Officer, however, the Chief Executive Officer has unrestricted access to all Board Members and vice versa.

The Executive comprises:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Chief Financial Officer
- Director, Community Services & People
- Director, Education & Research
- Director, NDIS Ready, Communication & Marketing
- Assistant Director, Education - Aspect's Schools

## **The Office Bearers of the Board**

### **Role of the Chair**

The main internal tasks of the Chair are to:

- lead the Board and facilitate Board meetings
- ensure the Board is focused on achieving Aspect's vision, mission and strategic goals
- ensure that each Director has an opportunity to express their views freely and frankly during Board meetings
- maintain a professional working relationship and be the Board's principal point of contact with the Chief Executive Officer
- set the agenda for each Board meeting in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer
- ensure the Board carries out appropriate assessments of its own performance
- ensure meetings are conducted effectively and that the adequate minutes are taken of each meeting

The main external tasks of the Chair are to:

- represent the Board and Aspect, as appropriate, to its various stakeholders

- act as a spokesperson, where appropriate, in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer
- chair each annual general meeting of members and all other general meetings of members

### **Role of the Deputy Chair**

The role of the Deputy Chair is to act for the Chair in his or her absence in performing the tasks identified above.

### **Role of the Honorary Treasurer**

The main tasks of the Honorary Treasurer are to:

- chair the Finance and Audit Committee and through this Committee
  - provide Board leadership in overviewing Aspect's financial management
  - give due consideration to key strategic financial decisions that are made by Aspect

### **Role of Individual Directors**

Directors govern a company on behalf of the shareholders of that company. The Corporations Act 2001 states in s 198A (1) that "...the business of a company is to be managed by or under the direction of the directors". All directors have certain basic legal duties and responsibilities.

The Corporations Act 2001 specifies four main duties for directors:

- care and diligence - to act with the degree of care and diligence that a reasonable person might be expected to show in the role (s 180). The same duty is imposed on directors at common law. The business judgment rule (discussed below) provides a 'safe harbour' for a director in relation to a claim at common law or under s 180
- good faith - to act in good faith in the best interests of the company and for a proper purpose (s 181), including to avoid conflicts of interest, and to reveal and manage conflicts if they arise. This is both a duty of fidelity and trust, known as a 'fiduciary duty' imposed by general law and a duty required in legislation
- improper use of position - to not improperly use their position to gain an advantage for themselves or someone else or to the detriment to the company (s 182)
- improper use of information - to not improperly use the information they gain in the course of their director duties to gain an advantage for themselves or someone else or to the detriment to the company (s 183)

# Governance Statement (continued)

## Board Composition and Size

Aspect's Constitution provides that the Board shall consist of not less than eight persons and not more than twelve persons. The Constitution provides that of those twelve persons, up to ten persons may be elected by Members, each of whom holds tenure as Directors for a term of three years. The Constitution also provides for the Board to appoint up to two further Directors.

At least one third of Member-elected Directors must retire from office at the Annual General Meeting each year; however, such retiring Directors are eligible for re-election. For the purposes of determining the number of Directors required to retire, the number is reduced by each Member-elected Director who has retired or been removed since the last Aspect Annual General Meeting. This requirement is also subject to Clause 13.1(d) of the Constitution which states that no Member-elected Director will have his/her term automatically expire more than once in every three years.

The term of Board-appointed Directors expires at the commencement of the next Board meeting to occur after every Annual General Meeting. Each Board-appointed Director whose tenure expires may then be re-appointed by the Board as a Board-appointed Director.

Directors appointed to fill casual vacancies hold office until the next Aspect Annual General meeting following their appointment and are eligible for election by Members for a further term of three years at the Annual General Meeting.

Directors should bring to the Board sound business judgement and a performance focus, empathy for people with an ASD and their families, broad strategic thinking, a collegiate and team playing approach, a philosophical commitment to the objectives of Aspect, and a willingness and capability to devote the required time to the Board's affairs.

## Nomination of New Directors

Any Members wishing to nominate a candidate for election as a Member-elected Director at an AGM must comply with the nomination process prescribed in the Constitution. The Chief Executive Officer then arranges for all member nominees to meet with the Chair of the Nomination and Remuneration Committee, the Chair of the Aspect Board and at least one other Director to discuss the rights and responsibilities associated with becoming an Aspect Director. The Committee also arranges a meeting of the nominee with the Chief Executive Officer. This process is designed to ensure

that candidates for appointment as potential Directors of Aspect are fully aware of the scope of the role and will be prepared to become part of an effective team governing the organisation once they are appointed.

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

This process applies equally to a candidate for appointment as a Board-appointed Director, and must be completed prior to a decision being made by the Board regarding the appointment.

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

The current composition of the Board and Board Committees, together with background details on each Director, is set out in Aspect's Annual Report and on Aspect's website – [autismspectrum.org.au](http://autismspectrum.org.au)

## Meetings of the Board and their Conduct

The Board meets seven times each year. Additional meetings may be held as required to address specific issues or as the need arises. The Board decides on an annual schedule of major items that are considered over the seven meetings along with regular items to monitor Aspect's performance.

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

## The Review of Board Performance

The Board undertakes a review of its performance annually by way of a survey of its Directors to ensure that the expectations of all Directors are aligned, to confirm areas of successful performance and to identify those areas requiring further improvement as part of Aspect's commitment to continuous improvement throughout the organisation. The results of the survey are discussed by the Board and actions identified as part of the Board's commitment to continuous improvement.

The review of Board performance includes an assessment of:

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

### **Board Committees**

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

Each Board Committee is chaired by a Director. At least one other Director must sit on each Committee. Committee membership must be approved by the Board. Directors and external individuals invited by the Board to sit on the Committee are members of the Committee and have a right to vote on matters considered by the Committee, while members of staff who attend and provide advice to the Committee do not have the right to vote on any matter. Committee meetings are to be conducted using the same meeting procedures as are provided for the Board in the Constitution, for example, a quorum for a Committee is 50% of its members. An exception to this rule is the Finance & Audit Committee where a quorum of three is required and all decisions of the Committee must be unanimous.

At present, the Board has three Committees. They are:

- Finance & Audit Committee
- Research & Innovation Committee
- Nomination & Remuneration Committee

In addition to the above committees, the Board has established a Strategy Group comprising at least four Board members, community representatives and the Executive. The group provides advice on Aspect's high level strategy and its execution to the Board and management, meeting five times each year. It is co-chaired by one of the Board Directors and the Chief Executive Officer. Appointments of all members to the Strategy Group are approved by the Board. It operates more as a workshop than a formal Board Committee.

## **Aspect's Key Processes**

### **Strategic Planning**

The strategic plan charts the course for Aspect for the ensuing three years. Aspect's approach to strategic planning is primarily based on Graham Kenny's Strategic Factors which has been designed to provide flexibility in order to cope with changes in the not-for-profit sector.

It is Aspect's commitment to monitor the plan at its Board meetings, Executive meetings and management network meetings to ensure that the plan is being implemented. Any changes which impact on the plan are progressively factored into the plan. The plan as a whole is reviewed annually and stepped out one more year so as to ensure that the plan always operates on the basis of a three year period.

Aspect's strategic plan is built on a system which ensures that its strategies:

- produce competitive advantage
- are linked directly to quantifiable objectives
- are implemented

Aspect's strategy development and financial projections in the plan take place within a scope defined by the following guidelines:

- plan 3 years ahead
- have an action plan for the immediate year ahead
- have measurable Key Performance Indicators that are reported against at each Board meeting
- be financially sustainable

Integral to Aspect's success and the development of winning strategies are its key stakeholders, that is, those organisations and individuals with whom Aspect proactively seeks engagement in order to build and maintain ongoing relationships. This identification allows Aspect to focus its strategies on meeting their expectations and gaining competitive advantage, with particular reference to its external stakeholders.

Aspect's four external key stakeholders are:

1. People Aspect supports
2. People with an ASD and their families
3. Governments
4. Donors and supporters

# Governance Statement (continued)

Aspect's two internal key stakeholders are:

1. Aspect's Members, and
2. Aspect's staff which include employees (paid staff) and volunteers (unpaid staff).

Two central concepts in Aspect's planning process are the objectives and strategic factors for each stakeholder. The objectives are what Aspect wants from its key stakeholders. The strategic factors are what the key stakeholders want from Aspect.

If Aspect is to achieve its objectives with its key stakeholders, then it must meet the strategic factors expected by its stakeholders. Each strategic factor has a strategy. The actions listed against each strategy are designed to implement that strategy. The result of each action is reported to the Board or one of its Committees.

At the October 2008 Board meeting, the Board resolved to approve the strategic planning cycle based on Geoffrey Kiel's model of **The Strategic Board**. Kiel's cycle for planning was able to be incorporated into the existing approach. Its advantage was that it clearly differentiated the tasks of Board and management.

The significant additional step proposed by Kiel was the development of a high level corporate document known as **The Strategic Directions Document** which outlined the corporate strategy of the organisation for the ensuing three years. The strategic directions for the ensuing three years are developed in an annual workshop comprising Directors and the Executive, and are then approved by the Board at its June meeting.

With this high level corporate document in place, it is the task of the Executive and other leading managers to use the strategic directions to develop the Strategic Plan for the next three years by taking Aspect's current Strategic Plan out one more year. The new Strategic Plan is then brought to the Board for approval at its August meeting. At the following Board meeting (held in September) the specific Action Plan for the coming year based on the three year plan is presented to the Board for approval. This forms the basis of the budget planning for the coming year.

## Key Financial Processes

Aspect's financial year is the calendar year. The operating and capital budgets are prepared for the coming year for presentation and approval at the December Board meeting based on the recommendation of the Finance & Audit Committee.

The budget process aims to fully engage the directors and managers of the service groups so that the budgets can be signed off by all levels of management.

Budgets are prepared in the context of improving Aspect's financial sustainability. Measureable targets are set annually as part of the budget parameters and include such matters as the net contribution by services, the net contribution by Relationship Fundraising, cash on hand, the current ratio and the Strategic Reserve.

Monthly reporting of budget versus actual for each service is provided to the relevant manager within ten (10) working days of month end. Meetings to discuss the results and forward action plans are held and documented within fifteen (15) working days of month end.

Budgets are reviewed twice a year and updated to reflect YTD results and expectations for the Year to Go. Management agreement is documented for any revised budgets. The budget reviews are completed during April and September.

Monthly reporting by Finance to the Finance and Audit Committee is delivered on time and completed four (4) days prior to meeting dates. Management account reporting incorporates the relevant outcomes and forward plans as agreed with the managers in monthly budget meetings.

Internal review visits to the service locations are undertaken by Finance as scheduled and exception matters are followed up and resolved.

The management accounts are presented to the Finance & Audit Committee for approval each month. Any variations to the approved budget are presented to the Finance & Audit Committee for approval.

The statutory accounts are prepared for approval by Aspect's members at the AGM held in May each year. The Board approves the statutory accounts at its April meeting based on the recommendation of the Finance & Audit Committee.

## Management Accountability

The Chief Executive Officer provides an overview at each Board meeting on the key strategic and operational issues facing the organisation.

The Executive tables a report at each Board meeting on important activities that have taken place since the

previous Board meeting that identify how Aspect is achieving its strategic plan.

A schedule of management reports is prepared as part of the rolling 12 month agenda for the Board meeting and Board Committees.

### **Corporate Risk Management**

The Board is responsible for monitoring and reviewing Aspect's Corporate Risk Management activities. To assist the Board in this role it has delegated management of the task to the Corporate Risk Management Committee chaired by the Director, Community Services & People. The Committee reports directly to the Board four times a year and includes one Director in its membership. The Committee is tasked with both measuring risk as well as proactively working to reduce key risks facing Aspect through Corporate Risk Management.

Aspect recognises that there are inherent risks in all that it does. Risks include:

- hazard risks or the threat of negative events occurring - these are risks that organisations typically insure against
- opportunity risks or the possibility of positive events not occurring resulting in lost opportunities
- uncertainty risks where actual results do not equal anticipated results - through, for example, changes in the regulatory environment or reliance on a source of income that fails to deliver

Aspect's task is to identify the likelihood and the consequences of the main risks it faces, with particular reference to those risks that are considered a moderate risk, a high risk or an extreme risk.

### **Continuous Improvement**

Aspect has developed a specific continuous improvement approach known as the **Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Approach (CCIA)** based on ten principles that apply across the organisation. Aspect recognises that a commitment to its Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Approach (CCIA) is essential for its long term success as a leading service provider in the field of autism spectrum disorders.

The ten principles that comprise the CCIA are drawn widely from Aspect's culture to give a more

comprehensive overview of what is involved in continuous improvement for the entire organisation compared with the more traditional view of continuous improvement. It also goes beyond the quality assurance approach which is about meeting standards.

External quality assurance programs with which Aspect is required to comply are maintained through regular auditing by third parties.

### **Key Processes with Staff**

Regular processes with which Aspect engages with staff are:

- continuously improving its recruitment, induction and retention practices along with succession planning
- appropriately remunerating its staff by maintaining labour market competitiveness by industrial awards or remuneration reviews of contract staff
- recognising its staff and celebrating their successes. This is done in the course of their work but also includes such activities as giving long service awards, recognition awards and a research fellowship known as the Elizabeth Hoyle Fellowship
- listening to its staff through a biennial staff survey followed up with an action plan
- providing a wide range of professional development activities for its staff including learning and development programs, a leadership development program, internal consultancy services, coaching, mentoring and collaborative learning

### **Key Processes with Government**

State and federal governments are key external stakeholders for Aspect because of significant funding Aspect receives from these sources. As a consequence Aspect meets regularly with relevant government ministers, their staff and government officials to report on its work and further build its relationships with ministers and departments. As well, Aspect commits to accepting services funded by government and meeting other reporting requirements in a timely manner.

# Treasurer's Report

## Overview

Throughout 2012 Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) expanded the range of service available to our clients, including a significant increase in the number of places available in our schools. The new facility at Thornton in the Hunter region and continued growth in our satellite classes throughout NSW were additional key achievements. During the year Aspect's service capability was extended, particularly in Victoria, and the new Positive Partnerships program which enables the delivery of effective support and skills to professionals and carers also commenced.

These achievements took place within the backdrop of unprecedented change in the sector, including government policy trends towards providing individualised funding packages to people with a disability. During 2012 Aspect refined the team, strategies, processes and systems necessary to ensure our vision of providing the best opportunities for our clients.

In this context of expanded service delivery and change management the Comprehensive Income result of \$4.05m in 2012 was noteworthy, and represented an increase of \$1.59m over the prior year.

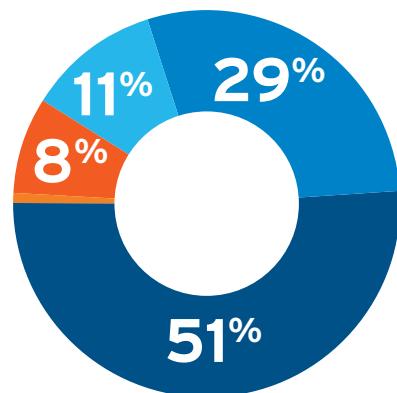
The Comprehensive Income result was aided by government funding in respect of the Aspect Hunter School, along with strong fundraising results in the form of donations and bequests.

## Income

Total income for 2012 was \$57.13m, an increase of 14% over the prior year.

The increase in operating income was mainly due to growth in school enrolments and related fee and grant income, an increase in fundraising and the receipt of grants for the Hunter school.

**Graph 1: Source of Funds (\$'000)**



- State Government \$28,998
- Federal Government \$16,502
- Fee for Service \$6,104
- Fundraising \$4,821
- Other \$701 (1%)

Government funding continues to be the major source of income for Aspect (see Graph 1) with State and Federal funding totalling some \$45.50m in 2012 and representing 80% of total income. Total fees for services provided \$6.1m, or 11% of all income received. Overall, the mix in income source was consistent with the prior year.

Gross fundraising income increased in 2012 by \$0.9m to \$4.82m. The fundraising result was achieved through a combination of increased bequest income to \$0.75m and continuing strong support from our regular donors.

We were grateful to have 14,800 donors during the year, an increase of 64% over 2011. Fundraising continues to represent a vitally important part of our income as it allows Aspect to provide services that are either not funded by government, or where the costs are not fully met.



ROBERT BROWN  
HONORARY TREASURER

## Expenses

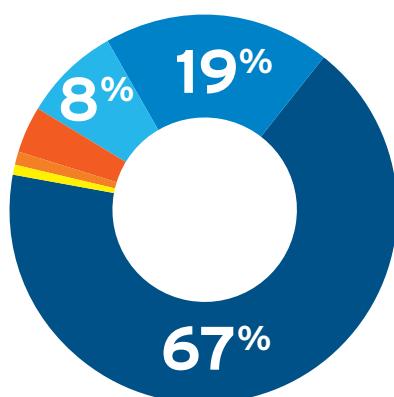
Expenses increased by 12% over the prior year to \$53.1m in 2012. Graph 2 shows a breakdown by expense type.

By group, Education & Research accounted for 67% of total expenses compared to 64% in 2011.

Central Office costs decreased to 8% of total expenses. This is down on the prior year and reflects cost saving initiatives, plus a focus on the core corporate centre functions necessary to allow Aspect to continue to develop services and refine our brand.

By expense type, salary costs were \$43.6m which represented 82% of total expenditure, up from 80% in 2011. This increase is directly attributable to increased direct services to clients through our schools and Aspect's Building Blocks.

**Graph 2: Where the money was spent (\$'000)**



■ Education	\$35,684
■ Community Services	\$9,962
■ Central Office	\$4,355
■ Positive Partnerships	\$2,337 (4%)
■ Investments and Loans	\$244 (1%)
■ Fundraising	\$540 (1%)

Capital expenditure increased to \$4.1m in 2012, up from \$2.9m in 2011. This increase was primarily attributable to the construction of the new school at Thornton in the Hunter.

## Assets & Reserves

Overall net assets of the organisation increased to \$18.2m in 2012 from \$14.1m in 2011.

The increase in assets classified as **Property and equipment** in the accounts was the most significant factor in the increase in net assets, largely due to the completion of the new school in the Hunter.

Aspect's investment portfolio (disclosed in the **Statement of financial position** as **Non-current Other financial assets**) increased from \$1.46m in 2011 to \$1.97m as at December 2012 as a result of investment movements and a large bequest received in December.

Aspect's cash position fluctuates significantly throughout the year due to the timing of both government funding and fee for service receipts. Cash and cash equivalents were \$9.07m at year end, up from \$4.48m at the end of the prior year. Current liabilities also increased year on year to \$8.96m. Management continues to place emphasis on cash flow, including improving reporting, forecasting and alignment to service delivery.

## Conclusion

A solid financial base is an essential component of sustainable service delivery.

With this in mind, 2012 can be regarded as a good starting point for the next phase of development within the organisation as we move to a person centred funding model.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of the Finance team within Aspect who demonstrated an ability to adapt to significant change throughout 2012, and also to the Executive team as a whole for their continued focus on financial dimensions.

Finally, I offer my sincere thanks to my colleagues on the Board, particularly those on the Finance & Audit Committee, for their ongoing support.

Robert Brown  
Honorary Treasurer

# Membership of Board Committees & the Strategy Group

**In accordance with our Corporate Governance Statement, each Board Committee is chaired by a Board Director and the membership is approved by our Board. The Board thanks the members of these Committees for their contribution and commitment to this important task.**

The Membership of Aspect's Board Committees and the Strategy Group as at 30 April 2013 were:

## **Finance & Audit Committee**

Mr R Brown (Chair), Honorary Treasurer

Mr H Capra, Board Director

Mr D Foster, Board Director

Mr K Perkin, Immediate Past Chair

Ms J Young, Chair of the Board

## **Research & Innovation Committee**

Dr D Starte (Chair)

Mr M McEwen, Board Director

## **Independents**

Associate Professor M Carter, Director Special Education Centre, Macquarie University

Professor S Einfeld, Senior Scientist, Brain & Mind Research Institute, University of Sydney

Dr C Kilham, Faculty of Education, University of Canberra

Dr N Silove, Consultant Paediatrician, Clinical Director Medical - Community, Ambulatory, Rehabilitation, Population & Allied Health (CARPA), Head of Child Development Unit, Senior Clinical Lecturer, University of Sydney

Associate Professor D Evans, Special Education, University of Sydney

Professor J Roberts, Autism Centre for Excellence, Griffith University, QLD

Professor K Williams, APEX Australia Chair of Developmental Medicine, University of Melbourne, & Head, Developmental Medicine, Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne VIC

## **Nomination & Remuneration Committee**

Mr P Werner (Chair), Board Director

Mr M McEwen, Board Director

Mr K Perkin, Immediate Past Chair

Ms J Young, Chair of the Board

## **Corporate Risk Management Committee**

Mr D Foster, Board Director

## **Strategy Group**

Mr L Horin, Board Director and Mr A Ford, CEO (Co-Chairs)

Ms L Beavan, parent of a person with an ASD

Dr T Clark, Director, Education & Research

Ms E Gadek, Assistant Director, Education - Aspect Schools

Ms A Green, parent of a person with an ASD

Ms J Hamblin, Board Director

Mr I Joseph, Board Director

Mr J Kelly, Director, NDIS Ready, Communication and Marketing

Mr R Pesavento, Board Director

Mr M Schlosser, Director, Community Services & People

Mr I Skinner, Chief Financial Officer

Ms J Young, Chair of the Board

# Financial Report

for the year ended 31 December 2012

## Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)

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

Annual report for the year  
ended 31 December 2012

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# Directors' Report

The Directors present their report together with the financial report of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) for the year ended 31 December 2012 and the auditors' report thereon.

## Directors

### Jeanie Young (known as Jenny) – Chair

Qualifications – B.Bus., GAICD, is a Partner in Ernst & Young's Advisory practice. 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 with an autism spectrum disorder. She joined the Board in March 2010 and is a member of the Strategic Think-Tank on Aspect's Client Priorities and the Finance & Audit Committee. Jenny is a Member-elected Director.

### Keith Perkin – Immediate Past Chair

Qualifications – B.Bus., CPA, is a consultant. Keith has an extensive commercial background primarily in the fields of management and marketing, having held senior positions at BP, Dymocks and Retravision as well as having held senior positions in the non profit sector at Big Brothers Big Sisters Australia and the Starlight Foundation. He joined the Board in 2004 and is a member of the Finance & Audit Committee and the Nominations and Remuneration Committee. Keith is a Life Member of Aspect, the former Chair of the Board and a Member-elected Director.

### Robert J. Brown – Honorary Treasurer

Qualifications – B.Sc., M.A., Grad, Dip. Applied Finance, is Head of Client Management with HSBC Securities Services, Australia. Rob was formerly a principal with Alford Brown & Associates and has also held senior executive roles with Westpac, the Commonwealth Bank and State Street Bank & Trust. 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 and chairs the Finance & Audit Committee. Rob is a Member-elected Director.

### Henry Capra – Director

Qualifications – B.Ec., ACA, has more than 24 years of senior management and finance experience in the financial services industry. He has held senior positions at 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 Board in December 2010 and is a member of the Finance and Audit Committee. Henry is a Member-elected Director.

### David Epper – Director

Qualifications – A.N.Z.I.I.P. (Senior Assoc) is the Managing Director of Accident and Health International Underwriting Pty Ltd and is also a Board member of SLE Holdings Pty Ltd and Dynamiq Pty Limited. He has extensive insurance industry experience, specialising in Accident and Health. David has a son with an autism spectrum disorder. He joined the Board in 2001 and is a Life Governor of Aspect. David was a Member-elected Director who resigned from the Board on 30 May 2012.

### David Foster – Director

Qualifications – B.E., F.I.E. (Aust), is a retired engineer with management experience at Pacific Power. David has an adult son with autism. He is particularly interested in services for adults and also convenes a group associated with the Norton Road Specialist Supported Living Village. David joined the Board in 1975, is a member of the Finance & Audit Committee and represents the Board on the Corporate Risk Management Committee. He is a Life Governor of Aspect and a Member-elected Director.

Jenny Young

Keith Perkin

Robert J. Brown

Henry Capra

David Epper

David Foster



### **Julie Hamblin – Director**

Qualifications – B.A., LL.B (Hons) (Syd), LL.M (McGill), is a partner of HWL Ebsworth, providing specialised legal and policy advice to the health sector. She also manages the firm's pro bono program. She has served on numerous government and non-government advisory bodies including international work with the UN on HIV policy. Julie is a director of Plan International Australia. She joined the Board in April 2010 and is a Member of the Strategic Think-Tank on Aspect's Client Priorities. Julie is a Member-elected Director.

### **Laurie Horin – Director**

Qualifications – B.Bus., FCA, F Fin, is an executive director of Carlisle Partners, a corporate advisory firm specialising in mergers and acquisitions, debt and equity funding for mid-market companies. He has in excess of 25 years' experience in professional accounting, corporate and investment management, and investment banking. Laurie has worked extensively in Australia, USA and South East Asia. He is also a board member of a number of client companies. Laurie joined the Board in September 2012 as a Board-appointed Director and co-chairs the Strategic Think-Tank on Aspect's Client Priorities.

### **Ian Joseph – Director**

Qualifications – B.Bus., Grad Dip Ed, FAMI, AFAIM, is a private banking and finance industry consultant and 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 has an autism spectrum disorder. Ian joined the Board in March 2011 as a Board-appointed Director and is a member of the Strategic Think-Tank on Aspect's Client Priorities.

### **Malcolm McEwen – Director**

Qualifications – B.Bus., M.Bus., is an executive search and selection consultant with Carmichael Fisher. Malcolm is the father of a child with an autism spectrum disorder. He joined the Board in 2004, is a member of the Nominations & Remuneration Committee and the Research & Innovation Committee. Malcolm is a Member-elected Director.

### **Robert Pesavento – Director**

Qualifications – General Manager, Consumer Operations, with SingTel Optus Pty Limited. Robert is the father of a son with an autism spectrum disorder. He joined the Board in 1999, is a member of the Strategic Think-Tank on Aspect's Client Priorities and is a former Deputy Chair of the Board. Robert is a Life Member of Aspect and a Member-elected Director.

### **Dr David Starte – Director**

Qualifications – M.B.B.S., M.R.C.P.(UK), F.R.A.C.P., is the Service Director of the Royal North Shore Hospital's Child Development Service, and a Clinical Associate Lecturer in the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health, School of Medicine, University of Sydney. His interests include development paediatrics, including autism spectrum disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and audiology. David joined the Board in 2004 and chairs the Research & Innovation Committee. David is a Member-elected Director.

### **Peter Werner – Director**

Qualifications – B.Comm., is a Director of PW Executive. He has previously worked in the banking industry with BT Australia and Citibank. Peter is the father of a young man with an autism spectrum disorder. He joined the Board in 2001 and chairs the Nominations & Remuneration Committee. Peter is a Life Governor of Aspect, a former Chair of the Board and is a Member-elected Director.

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

Laurie Horin

Julie Hamblin

Ian Joseph

Malcolm McEwen

Robert Pesavento

Dr David Starte

Peter Werner



# Meetings of Directors

	Directors Meetings		Finance & Audit Committee		Strategic Think-Tank		Research Committee		Nominations & Remuneration 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 Young	7	7	9	10	5	5			1	1
Mr K Perkin	7	7	9	10					1	1
Mr R Brown	5	7	7	10						
Mr H Capra	6	7	9	10						
Mr D Epper (resigned 30 May 2012)	1	2								
Mr D Foster	6	7	10	10						
Ms J Hamblin	5	7			3	5				
Mr L Horin (joined 17 Sep 2012)	2	2								
Mr I Joseph	7	7			3	5				
Mr M McEwen	5	7					2	2	1	1
Mr R Pesavento	6	7			5	5				
Dr D Starte	7	7					2	2		
Mr P Werner	6	7							1	1

## Company Secretary

The following person 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 flexible, responsive and evidence-informed services to children, young people and adults with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and other disabilities. These include information services, diagnostic and assessment services for people with an ASD, early intervention for young children with an ASD and other disabilities, educational services for school-aged children with an ASD to prepare them for transition to environments that are not autism-specific, community participation programs for adults with an ASD and other disabilities and behaviour support programs for people with an ASD and other disabilities of all ages. A range of support services are provided to families of people with an ASD. The provision of training and consultation to other professionals and parents in ways of working with people with an ASD also continues as does 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 with autism or other disabilities. It does this by delivering person centred solutions using flexible, responsive and evidence-informed services.

Its short term objectives are to have piercing clarity about its purpose, to put people at the centre of everything it does, to safeguard its relationship with the ASD community during this period of transition for the sector and to succeed in this competitive environment as the sector trends to government providing individualised funding packages to people with a disability who then choose service or services that fit their needs or wants rather than governments funding organisations to provide services.

## **Strategies for Achieving those Objectives**

Aspect's strategies for achieving these objectives include:

- increasing Aspect's client base by offering services that are flexible, responsive and evidence-informed and that deliver outcomes to people with an ASD and other disabilities;
- working with governments to ensure that Aspect remains recognised as a quality organisation that is outcome focused, a valuable partner, and a specialist ASD service provider;
- growing our relationship with donors and supporters; 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, media awareness, human resource management and financial performance.

## **Operating results**

The operating result for 2012 was a surplus of \$4,003,388 (2011: surplus \$2,835,068).

## **Review of operations**

Government grants continued to provide the major operational income for Aspect, supported by fundraising and a contribution by clients' families for some of the services through a fee for service charge. Income from these three sources increased in 2012 to \$54,305,351 compared with \$49,183,251 in 2011. Government grants of \$2,118,990 for capital purpose is included in the statement of comprehensive income.

## **Contribution in 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 2012, the total amount that members of the company would have been liable to contribute if the company were wound up is \$6,600 (2011: \$6,900).

## **Significant changes in state of affairs**

During the year Aspect's Constitution was amended to include those services being offered to people with other disabilities along with people with an autism spectrum disorder. At the same time it is intended that Aspect remains an organisation primarily focussed on people with an ASD, their families and communities. Other than this, 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.

## **After balance date events**

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 307C of the Corporations Act 2001 is set out on page 56 and forms part of this report.

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



Jenny Young Chair of the Board  
Dated this 11th day of April 2013 at Sydney

# Statement of comprehensive income

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2012

	Notes	2012	2011
		\$	\$
Revenue from rendering of services		6,104,081	5,466,404
Federal/State grants and salary subsidies		45,499,558	40,045,152
Fundraising		4,820,702	3,899,693
Other revenue		700,876	811,464
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>57,125,217</b>	<b>50,222,713</b>
Employee expenses		(43,568,430)	(37,897,325)
Transportation costs		(1,374,494)	(1,150,340)
Insurance expense		(1,146,351)	(604,977)
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	4	(1,139,560)	(1,011,721)
Finance costs	4	(102,429)	(127,628)
Services		(1,652,820)	(1,950,703)
Other expenses from ordinary activities		(4,137,745)	(4,644,951)
<b>Total expenses</b>		<b>(53,121,829)</b>	<b>(47,387,645)</b>
<b>Surplus for the Year</b>		<b>4,003,388</b>	<b>2,835,068</b>
<b>Other Comprehensive Income</b>			
Net gain on revaluation of investments		296,081	169,838
Net loss on sale of investments		(253,799)	(544,660)
<b>Other Comprehensive Income / (Loss) for the Year</b>		<b>42,282</b>	<b>(374,822)</b>
<b>Total Comprehensive Income for the Year</b>		<b>4,045,670</b>	<b>2,460,246</b>

# Statement of financial position

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2012

	Notes	2012 \$	2011 \$
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	9,069,239	4,477,577
Trade and other receivables	7	1,263,765	2,240,464
Other financial assets	8	196,353	192,443
Other assets	9	723,408	841,984
Total current assets		11,252,765	7,752,468
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Other financial assets	8	1,969,084	1,465,070
Property, plant and equipment	10	18,353,337	15,463,654
Total non-current assets		20,322,421	16,928,724
Total assets		31,575,186	24,681,192
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Trade and other payables	11	7,570,383	4,882,498
Short term borrowings	12	97,026	86,781
Short term provisions	13	1,307,912	1,129,332
Total current liabilities		8,975,321	6,098,611
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>			
Other payables	11	-	871,059
Long term borrowings	12	1,411,807	1,516,472
Long term provisions	13	2,972,371	2,025,033
Total non-current liabilities		4,384,178	4,412,564
Total liabilities		13,359,499	10,511,175
<b>Net assets</b>		18,215,687	14,170,017
<b>Equity</b>			
Asset revaluation reserve	14	(335,741)	(631,822)
Asset realisation reserve	14	(998,577)	(744,778)
Accumulated surplus		19,550,005	15,546,617
<b>Total equity</b>		18,215,687	14,170,017

# Statement of changes in equity

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2012

	Asset Revaluation Reserve \$	Asset Realisation Reserve \$	Retained Earnings \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 January 2011	(801,660)	(200,118)	12,711,549	11,709,771
Surplus for the year	-	-	2,835,068	2,835,068
Total other comprehensive income for the year	169,838	(544,660)	-	(374,822)
<hr/>				
Balance at 31 December 2011	(631,822)	(744,778)	15,546,617	14,170,017
Surplus for the year	-	-	4,003,388	4,003,388
Total other comprehensive income for the year	296,081	(253,799)	-	42,282
<hr/>				
Balance at 31 December 2012	(335,741)	(998,577)	19,550,005	18,215,687

# Statement of cash flows

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2012

	Notes	2012 \$	2011 \$
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Receipts from customers and grants		62,602,179	48,690,529
Payments to suppliers and employees		(53,866,409)	(48,504,293)
Interest received		428,045	271,037
Dividend received		157,340	270,057
Interest paid		(102,429)	(210,754)
Net cash provided by operating activities		9,218,726	516,576
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Proceeds on disposal of investments		598,903	2,753,017
Payments for investments		(1,060,633)	(661,925)
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		(4,067,004)	(864,474)
Net cash (used in) / provided by investing activities		(4,528,734)	1,226,618
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>			
Repayment of borrowings		(94,420)	(87,399)
Net cash used in financing activities		(94,420)	(87,399)
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents held		4,595,572	1,655,795
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		4,670,020	3,014,225
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	6	9,265,592	4,670,020

# Notes to the financial statements

## FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2012

### 1 General information and statement of compliance

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

Aspect elected to early adopt the pronouncements AASB 1053: Application of Tiers of Australian Accounting Standards and AASB 2010-2: Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from Reduced Disclosure Requirements to the annual reporting periods beginning 1 January 2011 and 1 January 2012.

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements that have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards' reduced disclosure requirements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board and the Corporations Act 2001.

The financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2012 (including comparatives) were approved and authorised for issue by the board of directors on 10 April 2013.

### 2 Statement of significant accounting policies

#### Changes in accounting policies

There has been no change in accounting policies that affect the company during the reporting period.

#### 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 recognized 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:

<b>Class of fixed asset</b>	<b>Depreciation rate</b>
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 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.

At each reporting date, Aspect assesses whether there is objective evidence that a financial instrument has been impaired. Such impairment losses are recognised in the Statement of comprehensive income.

## **Notes to the financial statements For the year ended 31 December 2012 (continued)**

### **Financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income**

Aspect early adopted AASB 9 in 2010 and therefore all investments form part of Aspect's investment portfolio and have been classified as 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.

Note no impairment is required to be assessed for financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income.

### **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 comprehensive income.

### **Derecognition**

Financial assets are derecognised where the contractual rights to receipt of cash flows expires 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 profit or loss.

### **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 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 to balance 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 the government bond rate that represents 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 balance sheet.

## **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.

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

## **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 Tax 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 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 year end to the extent that 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 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

An impairment review performed in 2012 resulted in an impairment write down of plant and equipment of \$37,761.

##### 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. In the period management has changed the probability factors for teachers and teachers' aides. Management will continue to review these probabilities to ensure that they are appropriate.

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

### 3 Revenue from ordinary activities

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
School and day activity fees	3,765,551	3,379,975
Other fee for service	2,338,530	2,086,429
Federal grants	14,821,548	14,639,000
Government Capital grants	2,118,990	227,998
State grants and subsidies	28,559,020	25,178,154
Donations and bequests	2,892,510	2,233,321
Fundraising projects	1,928,192	1,666,372
Other revenue	700,876	811,464
Total revenue from ordinary activities	<u>57,125,217</u>	<u>50,222,713</u>

### 4 Operating surplus from operating activities

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

Depreciation of:

- Freehold land and buildings	42,167	2,500
- Leasehold buildings	259,261	256,883
- Office machines and equipment	501,505	397,574
- School library	3,025	5,274
Amortisation of:		
- Lease improvements	333,602	349,490
Total depreciation and amortisation	<u>1,139,560</u>	<u>1,011,721</u>

Borrowing costs

- Bank loans and overdraft	102,429	127,628
Net bad and doubtful debts expenses including movements in provision for doubtful debts	84,068	55,414
Net expenses from movements in provision for employee benefits	2,626,079	1,785,002
Operating lease and other rental payments during the year	1,037,980	1,170,004
Net loss/(gain) on disposal of non-current assets	37,761	36,937

## 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 of 1997.

## 6 Cash and cash equivalents

	Notes	2012	2011
		\$	\$
Cash at bank		9,068,835	4,474,651
Cash on hand		404	2,926
Cash and cash equivalents		9,069,239	4,477,577

In the prior year, cash at bank included special purpose funds (see note 11) that were separately identified and spent in accordance with specific instructions

### 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 Statements of Financial Position as follows:

Cash at bank and on hand		9,069,239	4,477,577
Bank term deposits	8	196,353	192,443
		9,265,592	4,670,020

## 7 Trade and other receivables

Government subsidies and fees		1,211,547	2,173,045
Less: Provision for doubtful debts		(124,737)	(75,774)
		1,086,810	2,097,271
Goods & services tax receivable		53,498	-
Other receivables		123,457	143,193
		1,263,765	2,240,464

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

At 31 December 2012, the ageing analysis of trade receivables was as follows:

	Total	0-30 days	31-60 days	61-90 days	+ 91 days
2012	1,211,547	975,496	54,505	13,994	167,552
2011	2,173,045	1,937,167	12,473	147,631	75,774

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 charge of \$84,068 was made in 2012 (2011: charge of \$55,414)

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
Balance 1 January 2012	75,774	88,345
(Credit)/charge for the year	84,068	55,414
Amounts written off	(35,105)	(67,985)
Balance 31 December 2012	124,737	75,774

Receivables past due but not considered impaired are:

31-60 days	\$54,505	(2011: \$12,473)
61-90 days	\$13,994	(2011: \$147,631)
91 days and over	\$42,815	(2011: \$nil)

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

**Notes to the financial statements** For the year ended 31 December 2012 (continued)

**8 Other financial assets**

	2012 \$	2011 \$
Current		
Bank term deposits	196,353	192,443
Non-current		
Available for sale financial assets	1,969,084	1,465,070

**9 Other assets**

Accrued income	590,664	612,424
Prepayments	132,744	229,560
	<b>723,408</b>	<b>841,984</b>

**10 Property and equipment**

Freehold land and buildings - at deemed cost	6,193,461	2,806,776
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(59,774)	(17,607)
	<b>6,133,687</b>	<b>2,789,169</b>
Leasehold buildings - at cost	10,400,287	10,400,287
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(1,432,537)	(1,173,276)
	<b>8,967,750</b>	<b>9,227,011</b>
Leasehold improvements - at cost	3,667,443	3,525,479
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(1,548,595)	(1,221,876)
	<b>2,118,848</b>	<b>2,303,603</b>
Office machines and equipment - at cost	3,202,150	2,709,383
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(2,081,558)	(1,580,997)
	<b>1,120,592</b>	<b>1,128,386</b>
School library - at cost	62,153	62,153
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(49,693)	(46,668)
	<b>12,460</b>	<b>15,485</b>
<b>Total property, plant and equipment</b>	<b>18,353,337</b>	<b>15,463,654</b>

	Freehold land and buildings (a) \$	Leasehold buildings \$	Leasehold improvements \$	Office machines and equipment \$	School library \$	Total \$
<b>Asset gross carrying amount</b>						
Balance at 1 Jan 2012	2,806,776	10,400,287	3,525,479	2,709,383	62,153	19,504,078
Additions (b)	3,386,685	-	179,462	500,857	-	4,067,004
Disposals	-	-	(37,498)	(8,090)	-	(45,588)
Balance at 31 Dec 2012	<b>6,193,461</b>	<b>10,400,287</b>	<b>3,667,443</b>	<b>3,202,150</b>	<b>62,153</b>	<b>23,525,494</b>
<b>Accumulated depreciation</b>						
Balance at 1 Jan 2012	(17,607)	(1,173,276)	(1,221,876)	(1,580,997)	(46,668)	(4,040,424)
Depreciation	(42,167)	(259,261)	(333,602)	(501,505)	(3,025)	(1,139,560)
Disposals	-	-	6,883	944	-	7,827
Balance at 31 Dec 2012	<b>(59,774)</b>	<b>(1,432,537)</b>	<b>(1,548,595)</b>	<b>(2,081,558)</b>	<b>(49,693)</b>	<b>(5,172,157)</b>
<b>Carrying amount</b>						
<b>31 December 2012</b>	<b>6,133,687</b>	<b>8,967,750</b>	<b>2,118,848</b>	<b>1,120,592</b>	<b>12,460</b>	<b>18,353,337</b>

(a) The estimated fair value of land and buildings at 31 December 2012 is \$18,538,000. These estimates include the South Coast School (\$1,650,000), the Central Coast School (\$2,880,000), the Western Sydney School (\$3,288,000), the Vern Barnett School at Forestville (\$5,720,000) and the Hunter School (\$5,000,000) which are reflected in our insurance coverage.

(b) Additions include the construction of a new school (\$3,057,605) and community resource centre (\$329,080) on land owned by Aspect at Thornton in the Hunter.

## **11 Trade and other payables**

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
<b>Current</b>		
Trade creditors	546,743	551,794
Other creditors and accruals	2,889,184	2,388,696
Goods & services tax payable	-	5,711
Special purpose funds (a)	-	601,663
Government subsidies in advance	<u>4,134,456</u>	<u>1,334,634</u>
	<u>7,570,383</u>	<u>4,882,498</u>
<b>Non-current</b>		
Government subsidies in advance	-	871,059
	<u>-</u>	<u>871,059</u>

a) The special purpose funds represent the balance of money provided to Aspect from time to time, that are required to be spent on identified purposes at the time of fundraising. The treatment of these funds was reviewed and all funds received in the period have been recognised as income.

## **12 Borrowings**

	2012	2011
<b>Current</b>		
Bank loan - secured	<u>97,026</u>	<u>86,781</u>
<b>Non-current</b>		
Bank loan - secured	<u>1,411,807</u>	<u>1,516,472</u>

There are two bank loans denominated in Australian dollars. The amount in current liabilities comprises the portion of Aspect's bank loans payable within one year. The non-current balance represents the portion of Aspect's bank loans not due within one year.

The two bank loans (the business loan and the bank bill business loan) with Westpac are secured by first mortgage over Aspect's land at Thornton and Corrimbal, as well as the lease at Terrigal and a Fixed / Floating charge over Aspect's assets. The business loan bears interest at 8.46% (2011: 9.54%) per annum, payable monthly and is expected to be repaid by April 2014. The purpose of the loan was to finance the administrative building at Forestville.

To accommodate the growth of the company, the Central Office was moved to Frenchs Forest and Aspect upgraded the vacant building to provide additional classrooms for the Vern Barnett School that currently occupies the site. To complete the project, a Margin Loan facility was established in December 2009 with a 20 year term for \$1.6 million at 8.69% variable secured against the BT Investment portfolio with a maximum gearing of 50%. In order to lift the restriction on Aspect's investment portfolio, the margin loan was replaced by Westpac's bank bill business loan at 5.94% variable in April 2011.

In addition, interest on the above mentioned loans is partly subsidised by the Department of Education NSW. The rate varies and is currently reimbursed at about 5% per annum.

**Notes to the financial statements** For the year ended 31 December 2012 (continued)

	2012 \$	2011 \$
<b>Financing arrangements</b>		
Aspect has access to the following financial facilities:		
Total facilities available:		
Bank overdraft	750,000	750,000
Bank loans	1,508,833	1,603,253
Facilities utilised at balance date:		
Bank loan	1,508,833	1,603,253
<b>13 Provisions</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Provision for long service leave	576,781	475,491
Provision for annual leave	731,131	653,841
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Non-current</b>		
Provision for long service leave	2,837,822	1,916,709
Provision for annual leave	134,549	108,324,
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	2,972,371	2,025,033
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	4,280,283	3,154,365

**14 Reserves**

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

**15 Commitments**

**Non-cancellable operating lease expense commitments**

Future operating lease rentals not provided for in the financial statements and payable:

Within one year	1,382,354	1,191,709
One year or later and not later than five years	2,477,158	2,543,281
Greater than 5 years	75,730	68,734
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	3,935,242	3,803,724

Aspect leases property and equipment under non-cancellable operating leases expiring from 1 to 75 years. Leases generally provide Aspect with a right of renewal at which time all terms are renegotiated.

**16 Fundraising Appeals conducted during the year**

Fundraising appeals conducted during the financial period included mail and telephone appeals, payroll giving, raffles, Comedy Night, Celebrity Golf Day, adventure challenges, 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 early intervention services, Someone to Turn To, Autism Information Line, some services for adults with autism and some of the work of the Aspect Research team.

The cost of raising these funds was 15% (2011: 23%) of the gross revenue received. This included the costs of events, all promotional activity and the payment for all administrative services including salaries for Relationship Fundraising staff.

	2012 \$	2011 \$
<b>Results of fundraising appeals</b>		
Gross proceeds from fundraising appeals recognised in current year	4,820,702	3,899,693
Less: Total costs of fundraising appeals	(540,054)	(1,018,737)
Net surplus	<u>4,280,648</u>	<u>2,880,956</u>
Less: Reserve from prior year	(601,663)	(131,794)
Add: Proceeds reserved for future commitments	-	601,663
Underlying surplus	<u>3,678,985</u>	<u>3,350,825</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.

The company used the services of one director of the company and the executive search firm over which he exercises significant influence. The amounts billed were based on normal market rates and amounted to \$30,000 (2011:\$Nil). There were no outstanding balances at the reporting dates under review.

## 18 Transactions with key management personnel

Key management within the Company are the executive members of Aspect. A second executive member from Education was added to Aspect's Executive to further represent the extensive range and complexity of Aspect's Education portfolio.

Key management personnel remuneration includes the following expenses:

Total key management personnel remuneration	1,117,331	1,017,894
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The Board Directors of Aspect receive no remuneration.

## 19 Events subsequent to 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



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

In accordance with the requirements of section 307C of the Corporations Act 2001, as lead auditor for the audit of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) for the year ended 31 December 2012, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

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

*C. Farley*

GRANT THORNTON AUDIT PTY LTD  
Chartered Accountants

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

C F Farley  
Partner - Audit & Assurance

Sydney, 11 April 2013

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# Directors' Declaration & Declaration by CEO

In the opinion of the directors of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect):

- a the financial statements and notes of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) are in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001, including
  - i giving a true and fair view of the financial position as at 31 December 2012 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date; and
  - ii complying with Australian Accounting Standards Reduced Disclosure Regime (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the Corporations Regulations 2001; 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.

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



Jenny Young  
Board Chair

Dated this 11<sup>th</sup> day of April 2013

## 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 2012;
- b the Balance Sheet gives a true and fair view of the state of affairs with respect to fundraising appeal activities as at 31 December 2012;
- c the provisions of the Charitable Fundraising (NSW) Act 1991 and the Regulations under that Act and the conditions attached to the authority have been complied with during the period from 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2012; 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 11th day of April 2013

# Independent Auditor's Report



Grant Thornton

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## **Independent Auditor's Report To the Members of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)**

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 2012, the statement of comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, the directors' declaration of the Company, and the declaration by the Chief Executive Officer in respect of fundraising appeals.

### **Directors' responsibility for the financial report**

The Directors of the Company are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the Corporations Act 2001. The Directors' responsibility also includes such internal control as the Directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### **Auditor's responsibility**

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require us to comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error.

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In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Company's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Company's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Directors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

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

**Independence**

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

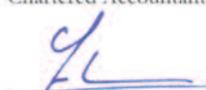
**Auditor's opinion**

In our opinion the financial report of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) is in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001, including:

- a. giving a true and fair view of the Company's financial position as at 31 December 2012 and of its performance for the year ended on that date;
- b. complying with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the Corporations Regulations 2001;
- c. the financial report and associated records have been properly kept during the year in accordance with the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and the regulations;
- d. monies received as a result of fundraising appeals conducted during the year has been properly accounted for and applied in accordance with the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and its regulations; and
- e. there are reasonable grounds to believe Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

*Grant Thornton*

GRANT THORNTON AUDIT PTY LTD  
Chartered Accountants

  
C J Farley

Partner - Audit & Assurance

Sydney, 11 April 2013

# 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 with an autism spectrum disorder or other disability and their families. John has a sister with autism, and brings his warmth and personal connection to everything he does for Aspect.

### Life Governors

Ian Barnett	Peter Dodd	Robert Pesavento
Jim H Bryant	H Emanuel	Kathleen Pigram
Rick Damelian	Tim Fischer AC	Ostilio Pisanu
John Doyle AM	Mark Fogarty	Gretchen Piner
David Epper	John Gerahyt	A H Polyblank
David Foster	Patricia Gibbs	Ken Robbins
Gerry Harvey	Marie Goodare	Jacqueline Roberts
Betty Hatch	Sybil Joel	Weston Ryan
Larry A Rawstorne	Judith A Johnson	Basil Sellers AM
Ray Seager	Joyce Kennedy	John Shand
Peter Werner	Marion Kingston	Jean Slaughter
A G Whelan	Errol Larbalestier	Paul C J Smith

### Life Members

Roger Q Allen OAM	P Mayne
George Andrews	Michael McColm
Julie Anthony AM OBE	Marjorie McDonald OAM
Mark Bowen	Tony McGrath AM
Judy Brewer	Jill McGrath
Val Browne OAM	Shirley McIntosh
Geraldine Bryant	Cath Mount
John Crow	Ron Mulock
Barbara Cummins	Claire O'Keefe
	Keith Perkin

Aspect Life Member Olivia Keighley passed away in October 2012. Olivia was recognised as a Life Member for her work on the original Acacia Committee, a group of committed volunteers who raised significant funding during the early days helping Aspect to become the organisation that it is today. Olivia is fondly remembered by her many family and friends including her daughter Josie.

**Help me learn  
Help me talk  
Help me love...**

By leaving a gift in your Will



For more information on including a bequest to Aspect  
in your Will or to make a donation please contact  
Aspect's Manager, Individual and Planned Giving,  
Sarah Pieters on (02) 8977 8394



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