DOG GUIDE HANDLERS AUSTRALIA (Inc)

ANNUAL REPORT 2018 – 2019

Dog Guide Handlers Australia (DGHA) is a national association which provides a voice for Australians who are blind or vision impaired who are dog guide handlers.

DGHA is an independent association of dog guide handlers, and is not affiliated with any dog guide school.

### KEY OBJECTIVES.

DGHA strives to foster, represent, promote, enhance and protect the interests of Australians who are blind or vision impaired who are dog guide handlers.

DGHA draws on the experiences and varied knowledge of its members, to provide peer support, advocacy and information to dog guide handlers throughout Australia.

Members of the DGHA Committee are:

Kevin Murfitt– President

Claudia Stevenson– Vice-President

Francois Jacobs– Treasurer

Joyce Jones – Secretary

Jenny Dahl– general Member (resigned June 2019)

Warwick Best – General Committee Member

Bev Best – General Committee Member

Roslyn Matthews– General Committee Member

Jamie Kelly – General Committee Member

Catherine Egan– General Committee Member

Annette Ferguson - General Committee Member

John Hardy – General Committee Member

PRESIDENT’S REPORT:

The 2018-2019 financial year, like many others has been very busy, but also one of important growth and development of DGHA.

Many of you have now also become part of the significant changes across the disability sector which have been taking place, and as My Aged Care (MAC) and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) reforms continue to roll out, I believe this dynamic environment is set to continue, making our peer support and collective voice even more important.

The highlight of the year was the third DGHA Biennial conference held in Sydney in November 2018. Over 40 DGHA members and colleagues from the disability sector gathered at the Novotel Brighton Beach for two days of discussions and presentations on topics ranging from innovations in dog guide training, international travel, robotic dogs, Tellington Touch massage for your dog guide, adaptive technology such as AIRA, and the NDIS and My Aged Care developments and challenges. At the Saturday evening dinner, Joyce Jones was awarded the prestigious Judith Killen Award for her service to DGHA and dog guide users. Please go to our website for more information and recordings of the conference [www.dgha.org.au](http://www.dgha.org.au)

Special thanks to Rowena Dowling, Ex President Nadia Matiazzo, Greg Madson, Erica Webb, and the rest of the DGHA Committee for their work on the conference.

Other notable developments this year were the re-establishment of our quarterly newsletter, a DGHA session at the Blind Citizens Australia National Conference in March 2019, in Tasmania, and the establishment of a partnership between Swinburne University and DGHA in the development of an App for dog guide users (in the final stages of development)

Regarding our ongoing advocacy work, we have continued to provide feedback and input into the issues of airline travel, access to taxis, ubers, and restaurants,

I would like to sincerely thank DGHA members for their ongoing willingness to contribute to DGHA’s pursuit of its principal objectives advocating for all of us as Dog Guide Handlers.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the work that the Committee has done in this past year. Claudia, Joyce, Francois, Bev, Warwick, Jamie, Ros, Annette, John, and Cathy have all played a vital role in our continuing work. I would also like to thank Greg Madson for managing our website, and Erica Webb for managing our social media, in particular, our Face Book page.

It is also very important to note that all of the DGHA Committee members are volunteers and therefore we often need to make hard decisions regarding the work we do which is often constrained by our limited resources.

There are a variety of ways you can provide further support and momentum to your Organisation. Committee participation is a good opportunity, and so is simply providing feedback, suggestions, topics for consideration, guest speakers you’d like to hear or specific policy initiatives – the ways you can add value for all of us are boundless.  In short, by getting involved in whatever way you can, strengthens our organisation and benefits us all and allows us to support more members in more ways. Our contact info is on the [www.dgha.org.au](http://www.dgha.org.au) website or you can email to [dgha@dgha.org.au](mailto:dgha@dgha.org.au)

Yours sincerely

Dr Kevin Murfitt AM

President DGHA

MEMBERSHIP REPORT:

Total DGHA Members up to 23 March 2020

108 Full members, up by 20

26 Associate members, up by 7

134 total DGHA Members

SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT:

Social Media Manager: Erika Webb.

DGHA social media activity since January 2019 up to 23 March 2020

• We follow via Twitter 1728 people and groups, down from last year’s 56.

• We have 1425Twitter Followers, down from last year’s 53.

• We have tweeted 28 times since January 2019

link to Twitter <https://twitter.com/dghaustralia>

Facebook Update:

553 members in the Facebook group page since January 2019 up to 23 March 2020

Link to Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/DogGuideHandlersAustralia/>

Facebook has gained 100 members since January 2019.

TREASURER’S REPORT:

DGHA Financial Statement 1 July 2017 - 30 June 2018

ANZ Account Balance on 1 July 2017: $1,481.55

ANZ Account Incoming from 1 July 2017:

11/09/2017

TRANSFER from PAYPAL Account: $3,500.00

3/10/2017

Memberships: $30.00

Total Income into ANZ Account: $3,530.00

Outgoing from ANZ account since 1 July 2017:

11/09/2017

Payment to DFACSIA grant remainder: $122.07

1/02/2018

Website Aussie Broadband: $10.00

12/02/2018

Yearly Gravity Forms Plugin payment: $38.42

5/03/2018

Website Aussie Broadband: $10.00

4/04/2018

Website Aussie Broadband: $10.00

2/05/2018

Website Aussie Broadband: $10.00

31/05/2018

Website Aussie Broadband: $10.00

25/06/2018

Conference Venue Deposit Novotel: $2684.45

Total Outgoing from ANZ: $2,894.94

Balance of ANZ Account as of 30 June 2018:

$2,116.61

DGHA PayPal Account

PayPal Account balance on 1 July 2017: $3,832.19

Incoming into PayPal Account from 1 July 2017:

Memberships: $50.00

Total income into PayPal: $50.00

Outgoing from PayPal Account from 1 July 2017

9 Sep 2017

Transfer to ANZ Bank account: $3,500.00

PayPal Fees: $2.20

Total Outgoing from PayPal: $3,502.20

PayPal Account Balance as of 30 June 2018:

$379.99

Total balance for Accounts as of 30 June 2018:

ANZ Account: $2,116.61

PayPal Account: $379.99

Total Balances: $2,496.60

Greg Madson

Treasurer