

## Chairs Report 2010 - 2011

I have great pleasure in presenting the Chair's Annual Report on the activities of the Management Committee of Integrated disAbility Action Inc (IdA) for 2010-2011.

IdA undertakes the following activities under its funding obligation with the Department of Health to operate as a peak consumer body for Territorians with disabilities, their carers, families and guardians.

### ***Information sharing:***

IdA disseminated five bi-monthly newsletters to all members. These newsletters are now also disseminated electronically via a number of other disability service providers through their network lists to their members. The newsletters cover issues that are or may be of interest to our members, 'hot topics' within the national and territory disability sector and highlights forthcoming functions / events of interests.

IdA hosts bi-monthly members meetings. IdA invites guest speakers to present on and discuss issues of interest and share information. The meetings also provide an opportunity to develop support networks and socialise.

During this last year the following guest speakers attended IdA members meetings:

- Mr. Bob Jones, Senior Manager Centrelink; to discuss and answer questions relating to income management
- Ms Deborah Bampton, IdA Secretary; gave a presentation on IdA's Strategic Plan which developed from the original consultation held by Di Feldman and Associates in September, 2009.
- Mr. Nick Rushworth, CEO Brain Injury Australia; to discuss and answer questions relating to what the organisation does nationally and how people with acquired brain injury in the Northern Territory can receive advice and information
- Ms Deborah Bampton, Somerville Community Services Inc and IdA Secretary; gave a presentation on the National Disability Insurance Scheme
- Ms Sue Keys, Department of Health A/Senior Manager Policy Division; to discuss and answer questions about the progress made with regards to the TIMES/SEAT review

### ***Information services:***

During the reporting period Sandie Dean our Administration Officer received numerous queries from IdA members, members of the public, other non-government organisations and government department staff by phone and email. Queries and assistance covered topics such as:

- disabled friendly accommodation services for local and interstate persons,
- tourists with disability,
- equipment hire faults and services,
- employment for persons with disability,
- housing access problems,
- volunteer work,
- arranging a fishing charter for a person in a chair,
- mental health services,
- access for amputees in Darwin and enquiries in Darwin for Alice Springs for amputees, and
- information on support services available in the Territory in general and in particular for people with acquired brain injury

IdA is staffed three days per week and as such needs to ensure office systems are streamlined and efficient. To assist in the process IdA introduced Online Banking as a user friendly way of receiving payment of membership fees and donations and to operate our business (thus allowing online payment of bills).

### ***Information gathering and support development:***

A function of IdA is to report to government the issues of interest to members. During the reporting period IdA surveyed a number of their individual and corporate members. Survey results included issues pertaining to transport, accessibility, service availability, equipment and funding.

The most overwhelming issue identified related to transport in particular Multi Purpose Taxis (MPT). This resulted in a letter sent to Nick Papandonakis, A/Executive Director of Transport who responded that he had appointed Glenda Thornton, A/Manager Commercial Passenger Vehicles to convene a working group composed of network owners and dispatchers, owners and drivers of MPT, consumer groups (IdA and Somerville Community Services), registered training organisations, Darwin City Council and senior management of the department to address the issues raised. The first meeting was held on the 27 April 2011 chaired by Simon Saunders, A/Director of Road Transport: Compliance. The meeting was well attended; discussion covered all areas raised in IdA's letter plus more issues from owner and operators perspectives. Statistics are being gathered for the next meeting to be held at the end of May.

After being approached by a member of the public from Alice Springs, IdA has been able to assist in setting up an informal Amputee Support Group. Izzy Dak, committee member based in Alice Springs, was able to arrange for the no-charge use of a community room where twenty or so people with amputations meet to share experiences. The group continue to meet informally over a coffee on a regular basis.

IdA is seeking interest for the Amputee Support Group in the Darwin region and as such has advertised for expressions of interest through various media channels, including pamphlet/brochures, newspapers, radio and television. Loretta Grimster, committee member has received solid interest for the formation of a social support group and a number of people with amputations have now joined as members.

IdA is providing support to the locally based group "Friends of Acquired Brain Injury". Support includes promotion of Quita Docking's inspirational ride from Timber Creek to Daly Waters, to raise awareness of and funds for Acquired Brain Injury (ABI). They are hoping to raise sufficient funds to commence a specialised horse riding school for people with ABI. As part of this IdA was approached by Gladys Docking, General Manager of Friends of Acquired Brain Injury, to act as trustee. A trust account was opened at Bendigo Bank.

IdA was approached by Nick Rushworth, Executive Officer Brain Injury Australia (BIA), to become an associate member of BIA. As an associate member of BIA, IdA would provide a valuable link for the Northern Territory with this national peak body. Currently Somerville Community Services is also an associate member of BIA and there is no Territory peak body for this group. As an associate member IdA would undertake a number of responsibilities including (but not limited to):

- promote activities BIA hosts within the Territory
- would forward publications and information on to members and relevant groups within the Territory
- would ensure people with ABI are included in our membership group and their specific issues promoted to government.

We have applied for Associate Membership and expect to be notified in June 2011.

As part of the 2009 strategic planning process IdA identified a number of areas that required improvement and community promotion. These included IdA's logo, website, introductory and information brochures. A Feedback flyer was required and has been produced.

## **Forums, Consultations and Meetings attended by Management Committee Members**

Management committee members have attended or regularly attend the following meetings:

- TIME/SEAT Review
- bi-monthly Darwin Aged & Disability [DAD's]
- Centrelink Forum, NDS Premises Standard Briefing
- National Disability Insurance Scheme [NDIS] Launch
- Disability Awareness Week
- Social Inclusion Seminar for the new City of Weddell
- Meet with Kon Vatskalis, Minister of Health at Parliament House
- Quality Framework Steering Committee meeting
- IdA Christmas Party
- quarterly Commercial Passenger Vehicle [CPV] Board
- CPV Strategic Planning Day
- NDIS Disability Consultation
- Multi Purpose Taxi [MPT] Working Group
- NT COSS 'Towards a just NT' – Designing the future together – Conference
- Rehabilitation Services – Royal Darwin Hospital

## **Committee Members**

IdA's Annual General Meeting held in May 2010 saw Joyce Deering stand down as Chair; Mary Johnson was elected unopposed as the new Chair.

The following Committee Members were elected;

- Debbie Bampton – Secretary
- Loretta Grimster – Treasurer
- Izzy Dak (Alice Springs)
- Kathleen Elliott
- Amber Misiak
- Liz Taylor, and
- Jenny Dunne.

Due to changes in circumstances the following committee members have resigned during the year or at the end of their term: Izzy Dak, Amber Misiak, Liz Taylor and Jenny Dunne.

Sandie Dean commenced with IdA in August 2010 as the Office Administrator, taking over the role from Kerry Bishop who held this position for seven years. Kerry spent her last week showing Sandie files and an overview of MYOB. Kerry has been a tireless, dedicated and loyal member and the backbone of our organisation and I thank her most sincerely for her contribution over these years

I sincerely thank all committee members for their input throughout this time and congratulate Sandie Dean, Office Administrator for her energy and skill in bringing our new website's contents to fruition by her liaison with Kate Pullen, graphic designer for the project.

I sincerely thank Barry Hanson for his advice when required and his continued pro bono auditing services for our organisation. It is greatly appreciated.



Mary Johnson,  
Chair Integrated disAbility Action