



**Guide
Dogs**
TASMANIA

Royal Guide Dogs for the Blind Association of Tasmania

Annual Review 2018-19



President's Report

By Royal Guide Dogs for the Blind Association of Tasmania President, Sue Shoobridge

I am pleased to present the President's Report for Royal Guide Dogs for the Blind Association of Tasmania (RGDBAT) for the year ended 30 June 2019.

We continue to grow our service offerings following our staged merger with VisAbility. Our Guide Dog services have expanded and services increased particularly in the area of children's therapy, occupational therapy, assistive technology and counselling services.

As NDIS continues to expand, we continue to adapt and change to meet the new world in which we operate. I would like to again take this opportunity to thank and acknowledge the VisAbility management and staff for their continued hard work, energy, commitment and dedication.

I would also like to express my gratitude to our volunteers, as without their support and time donated the provision of services to our clients would not be possible.

Many thanks to all our benefactors, donors and sponsors, whose generous ongoing support allows us to support those that need it most and for that we are truly grateful.



Board of Directors

Sue Shoobridge

President, Secretary
FCPA, FAICD, Retired
Director since 2013

Scott Marston

Vice President
CEO Earworx Pty Ltd
Director since 2012

David Donato

Financial Planner, Strategic Financial Planning ADFS
Director since 2012

Elaine Guy

Finance Manager, Contact Electrical Pty Ltd.
Honorary Life Member, Guide Dogs Tasmania
Director since 2011

Andrew Hogan

Optometrist, OPSM Group Pty Ltd
National President – Optometry Australia
Director since 2014

Kym Georgiou

VisAbility Board member since 2015
Representative Director since June 2018

Our Patron

Her Excellency Professor the Honourable
Kate Warner, AM, Governor of Tasmania

Guide Dog Program

2018-19 has been a busy year for Guide Dogs Tasmania. We currently have 23 working dogs and welcomed 12 new pups to the program, a feat made possible thanks to our 56 active puppy raising and boarding volunteers. The new additions to the puppy program has taken the total number of dogs in formal training to 24, which is nearly double the number from last year!

The dogs took in the local sights, sounds and smells during the 192 bus rides, and kept the Guide Dog Department on their toes with 63 trips to the vet.

During Pawgust, the dogs in training took 6,480,000 collective steps, which is a great effort! We are thankful to all the supporters around the state who registered for Pawgust, and braved icy conditions to walk every day for the month.

During the year we placed four Guide Dogs with clients, three Therapy and Companion Dogs and our first Autism Assistance Dog! We are all looking forward to following this journey to see just how much of an incredible difference this dog makes to the life of a child with Autism, and growing the program over time.

As the number of dogs grow, so to do the aftercare visits. Staff made 135 visits which is a significant increase compared to the 59 from the previous year.

Client Services

Taking a look at services offered through VisAbility Tasmania, our Assistive Technology service continued to grow with 332 hours of support delivered to clients across the state. With services delivered via face to face appointments, telephone and Skype, client feedback has shown us how important this service is to clients in aiding their independence.

Occupational therapy hours have increased from 805 to 1500 hours, and delivered hours of social work totalled 55 hours for our adult clients.

Our Children's Therapy Centre continued to grow across the past financial year, with 845 occupational therapy hours, 396 speech therapy hours and 149 physical therapy hours.



Our Journey

Engagement and Development

Supporting our Guide Dog services was the Engagement and Development Department, which brought in \$2,911,779 of donations and bequests across the year. Part of this revenue came from our iconic Collection Dog program, which continued to perform outstandingly thanks to the steady stream of donations coming in from the 1,929 sites hosting Collection Dogs.

Across the year, we held a total of 71 fundraising events and our Ambassador Dogs made 119 appearances. As Murphy learns more about the role ready to take over as Ambassador Dog, Dexter can start winding down and enjoying more days off in preparation for his retirement.

That concludes the highlights from 2018 – 19, another year of growth and new opportunities in many areas of the organisation. Thank you to our staff and volunteers who are vital to the success of the organisation, and its ability to provide more services to more Tasmanians in need.



Thanks to our sponsors

Local sponsors:

- Metro Tasmania
- VetCentre Montrose
- Specsavers
- Fairbrothers Foundation
- Bruce Wall Trust
- RF & RF Cane Charitable Trust
- Tasmanian Government - DHHS

National sponsors:

- Mars - Advance
- Boehringer Ingelheim
- Idexx
- Coles
- PAW by Blackmores
- Battery World
- McGrath

Guide Dog sponsors:

- Mrs Bridget Stott
 - Guide Dog pup Derek
 - Guide Dog pup Gemma
- Mrs Barbara Self and Tony and Felicity Walch
 - Guide Dog pup Frankie
- Midway Point Seniors Group
 - Guide Dog pup Elly

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