

ANNUAL REPORT 2012-2013



ROYAL GUIDE DOGS
TASMANIA

Lift



DEVELOPING SKILLS
OPTIMISING CHOICES
CREATING POSSIBILITIES

OUR PATRON



His Excellency the Honourable Peter Underwood AC
Governor of Tasmania

OUR MISSION

To provide high quality services to international standard, which will increase the independence and quality of life for blind and vision impaired people and assist them to achieve their full potential within the community.

OUR HEAD OFFICE

Royal Guide Dogs for the Blind Association of Tasmania
ABN 72 009 486 873
164 Elizabeth Street Hobart Tasmania 7000
Telephone 03 6232 1222
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Patron & Mission

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Cover Artwork: 'The Welcome Committee - Dexter and Bella'

*Copyright Kirsty Pilkington 2012
www.kirstypilkington.com.au*

This Page: Photographer, Kirsty Pilkington, taking advantage of a quiet moment during the photo shoot, with Hudson and Holly in November.

P.1 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The financial year ended 30 June 2013 has provided us all with wonderful opportunities to contribute towards moving Royal Guide Dogs Tasmania (RGDT) sustainably forward in its service to Tasmanians who are blind or vision impaired.

Strategic Planning and Risk Management

In April 2013, the Board revisited its three year rolling Strategic Plan. The fundamental intent of our strategic objectives remains largely unchanged from that reported last year:

- Extend the breadth and depth of our client service programs;
- Ensure financial sustainability;
- Optimise governance, operating structures and processes; and
- Extend the awareness and reach of RGDT.

The Board remains focussed on the appropriate identification and management of key risks that RGDT faces in meeting these strategic objectives. The strategic risk management framework has further matured, with respect to periodic reassessment and Board reporting, and oversight from the Audit & Risk Committee.

A Dedicated Management Team

The economic conditions for entities reliant on fundraising continue to be challenging, however our management team have shown great leadership in ensuring our limited resources are used optimally.

Our small management team continues to focus on providing strong leadership of our staff through further skill development, engagement and clarity on linkages between the day to day operations and the strategic direction of RGDT.

The Board is grateful for the hard working management team and staff that have increased front end service delivery; remained innovative in fundraising activities during a particularly challenging economic environment; and maintained a strong financial position from which to build a sustainable future.



A Board with Appropriate Skills and Passion

During the year, David Gordon, a director since 1999, resigned from the Board. David has been instrumental in providing RGDT with great insight into the needs of the vision impaired sector. On behalf of the Board and Management I express our gratitude for the large investment of time that David has contributed to RGDT and wish him all the very best in his future endeavours.

Further, during the year Mike Harris, Derek Fails and Edmay Jackson resigned from the Board and I thank them all for their contributions. Pleasingly, we have seen the addition to the Board of Scott Marston, David Donato and Nina Nelson, whom have complimented the mix of existing skills extremely well.

The Board Sub-Committee structures were reviewed during the year with the decision to form an Investment Committee and Audit & Risk Committee. This decision adds to the high level of governance structures already in place within RGDT.

I sincerely thank every member of the voluntary Board, management for significant input and the members, volunteers and supporters for continued support. I look forward to working for and with you all again to deliver strong outcomes in 2013/14.

Dave Howie
President



Opposite Page: Bella, a guest of honour at the Old Beach Vintage Car Show in February

This Page: 'Puppy Olympics' was a popular inclusion at the RGDT Volunteer Thank You Function in December. Here, pups and puppy raisers are resting after the Recall Race.



P.3 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

When working well, good governance provides clear direction, anticipates issues, communicates, is inclusive, moves and acts. Royal Guide Dogs Tasmania is fortunate to have strong governance structures and a motivated voluntary Board.

The Directors are:

David Howie (President)

Partner, KPMG Australia
Bachelor of Commerce UTAS

Affiliations:
Registered Company Auditor
Member, Institute of Chartered Accountants
Australia
Member, Institute of Internal Auditors Australia

Director since 2009
Audit and Risk Committee (Chair)

Benjamin Scott Swain (Vice President)

Partner at Murdoch Clarke Barristers & Solicitors
LLB (Hons) UTAS
Grad Cert of Legal Practice

Director since 2010
Investment Committee (Chair)

Ella Dixon

Regional Manager (N & NW), DPAC Community
Development Division
Master Regional Development Policy
Dip. Entrepreneurial Management
Graduate Australian Institute of Company Directors

Director since 2011
Audit and Risk Committee

David Donato

Financial Planner, Strategic Financial Planning
ADFS

Affiliations:
FPA

Director since December 2012
Investment Committee

This Page: Keeping an eye on the action at Agfest in May.

Opposite Page: Volunteers, staff and pups preparing for the Hobart Myer Christmas Pageant in November.



Elaine Guy

Finance Manager, Contact Electrical Pty Ltd
CPA

Affiliations:
Member, CPA Australia
Honorary Life Member, Royal Guide Dogs Tasmania

Director since 2011
Investment Committee

Scott Marston

General Manager, Institute of Marine and Antarctic
Studies
A/Dip B(A), B.Bus, Grad Dip PM, Grad Dip
Franchising

Director since November 2012
Audit and Risk Committee

Nina Nelson

Financial Controller
B.Com, CPA

Affiliations:
Member, CPA Australia

Director since December 2012
Audit and Risk Committee

Royal Guide Dogs Tasmania recognises the
commitment and expertise provided to the Board
from the following Directors, who retired during the
year:

Derek Fails - Director since 2009
David Lyn Gordon - Director since 1999
Michael Harris - Director since 2004 (past President)
Edmay Jackson - Director since 2011



P.5 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

With so much on the horizon, it can be difficult at times to keep your focus on the main game.

Fortunately, our committed team at Royal Guide Dogs Tasmania has been strongly focused on ensuring we continue to provide high quality services for Tasmanians who are blind or vision impaired.

There are plenty of changes in the wind to keep us on our feet though. Many people may have heard about the National Disability Insurance Scheme, now called DisabilityCare Australia. This is an important national initiative that will give new hope to many people in the community who are affected by disability.

Despite our best efforts, however, the majority of people who are blind or vision impaired will be excluded from this opportunity. As you age, the likelihood of developing a vision impairment increases threefold with every decade over 40 years of age. Age related vision loss and vision loss from complications associated with diabetes are two major causes. More than 76% of clients of Royal Guide Dogs Tasmania are aged over 65 and have age related vision loss.

Very few people are aware, that if your vision impairment occurs after you turn 65, you will not be covered by DisabilityCare Australia.

There are changes occurring in the aged care sector as well; however, it appears this sector is reluctant to acknowledge the specific needs of older Australians with a vision impairment. Our services are instrumental in ensuring that older Australians are able to remain living independently for as long as possible, although recognition of this cost-effective and valuable service has not been forthcoming to date.

Royal Guide Dogs Tasmania is working extensively with the Australian Blindness Forum and with our Guide Dogs Australia counterparts interstate to ensure that all Australians receive the most appropriate services to enable them to remain safe, independent and enjoying a high quality of life.

This is achieved primarily, through our dedicated and hard-working staff. Each member of our team is integral in ensuring delivery of our services. From our fundraising and telemarketing teams, who work tirelessly to raise the funds essential to delivering services, to our administrative staff who ensure our bills are paid, to our client services staff who are actively involved in the delivery of services. And then there is the extensive list of volunteers who so capably support our staff and programs.

I would like to extend my thanks to the staff and volunteers who have contributed to the continuing success of the organisation. I also express my sincere gratitude to our committed Board of Directors, who have provided engaged leadership and solid governance as we move to meet the challenges that lie ahead of us, whilst also assisting us to remain focused on the current issues of importance.

Finally I would like to thank our sponsors, supporters and those who have or are thinking of leaving a bequest to Royal Guide Dogs Tasmania. Times are somewhat tough in the Tasmanian economy, yet we continue to enjoy the generous support of many in our community. Your generous support is critical in enabling us to deliver services that literally change people's lives for the better and it is very much appreciated.

Warm regards,
Dan English, CEO



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - SUMMARY P.6

The figures below are a summary from our audited Annual Financial Report 2012-13. The full Financial Report and Auditor's Opinion are available in hard copy on request or via our website:

<http://www.royalguidedogs.com.au>

Statement of Comprehensive Income		
	2012-13	2011-12
Total income	2,654,635	2,359,759
Less expenses	(2,058,429)	(2,097,033)
Net surplus from continuing operations	596,206	262,726
Revaluation of assets - buildings	-	(77,406)
Total Comprehensive Income for the Year	596,206	185,320
Statement of Financial Position		
Assets		
Total current assets	4,640,152	4,041,250
Total non-current assets	1,298,730	1,403,672
Total assets	5,938,882	5,444,922
Liabilities		
Total current liabilities	246,854	261,105
Total non-current liabilities	32,708	120,703
Total liabilities	279,562	381,808
Net Assets	5,659,320	5,063,114
Equity		
Reserves	796,031	1,005,775
Accumulated surplus	4,863,289	4,057,339
Total Equity	5,659,320	5,063,114

This Page: Holly and Hudson in November. Photograph by Kirsty Pilkington.

Opposite: CEO, Dan English thanking Volunteers for their support during the Volunteer Thank You Function in December.



P.7 CLIENT SERVICES REPORT

The past year proved to be busy in the Client Services Department, delivering direct support to 845 Tasmanians who are blind or vision impaired. As with previous years, individuals aged 65 and over make up approximately 76% of our clients, however our services extend to all age groups. Our Life Skills, Orientation & Mobility and Guide Dog Mobility services are delivered with a positive and 'can do' approach, focusing on skill development, optimising choices and creating possibilities, with the ultimate aim of enhancing independence.

Another important part of our work is educating the community and providing professional education to a large range of external stakeholders such as family and friends, allied health, teachers, employers, service organisations and community and private service providers. We believe that the more aware and educated the community is, with a strong focus is on what is possible, there are better outcomes for blind or vision impaired Tasmanians.

We received and responded to 868 referrals (averaging at 72 referrals per month) and they came to us from a range of sources, with the highest percentages coming from families, then Ophthalmologists and Optometrists. Other referrals were also received from a range of other external stakeholders including, but not limited to: Community based OT's, the Low Vision Clinic, ACAT, GP's, community services, allied health, nurses, friends, hospitals and aged care facilities.

The service delivery team continued to provide services with professionalism and commitment, and sought to achieve positive outcomes for Tasmanians who are blind or vision impaired.

Client Story

The following client story illustrates how our timely and effective service provision supported an individual with her own choices, well-being and independence:

Emma (aged 50 years) was admitted to hospital with a retinal detachment in her right eye. Despite being unable to see with her left eye since a childhood accident, Emma had lived independently all her life. This acute medical episode left Emma functionally blind.

Hospital staff, without consultation with Emma determined that she should be placed in high needs residential accommodation. RGDT was asked to assist in transitioning Emma into residential care. However, RGDT in consulting with Emma, determined that this was not her preferred option. RGDT insisted that a specialist assessment take place in Emma's own home. The assessment demonstrated that Emma was more than able to live independently with minimal assistance. RGDT provided an individualised program for Emma, enhancing her mobility skills and activities of daily living.

RGDT provided training and support over a six-week period and at the conclusion of the program, Emma was successfully undertaking normal daily activities and accessing the community.

Although funding of approximately \$100,000 per annum was approved for Emma to move to residential care, RGDT had no funding provided for their service provision to Emma. Despite the lack of funding, RGDT replicate similar outcomes throughout Tasmania on a daily basis, assisting individuals to maintain independence, optimise choice and create possibilities where others may deem situations impossible.

Puppy Development

The primary goal of our Puppy Raising Program is to produce well-socialised, temperamentally and physically sound young dogs, suitable to be trained as Guide Dogs. This is a long and structured process involving placement of pups into the homes of volunteer puppy raisers, under the careful guidance of a RGDT Guide Dog Mobility Instructor.

Six pups were welcomed into the Puppy Development Program in FY 2012/13. These pups reside with volunteer families in the South of the state, and experiencing many sights and adventures as they undergo 16 months of socialisation. Raising a puppy is a rewarding experience for families and a unique way to give something back to the community. RGDT has around 30 volunteer families supporting our program through either Puppy Raising or part time Boarding.

Winta and Wendell began working with clients and are progressing well. Winta was matched with a first time handler in the North West of the state, and within months there is noticeable increase in the client's independence in mobility with extra routes being added and the unit being out and about a lot more.

Guide Dog Program

Once the puppies are approximately 18 months old they are brought in for assessment and then hopefully, the formal component of their training. Again, a structured process begins once the pup is assessed as suitable for the Guide Dog Training program.

Four dogs are currently undertaking intensive training learning the ins and outs of Guide Dog Mobility including stopping for drop offs, negotiating obstacles, locating doorways, and relocating destinations. A number of working guide dogs are reaching retirement age over the next twelve months. Once qualified, these training dogs will be involved in the changeover as client's transition from one Guide Dog to the next.



This Page, from top: Paddy and Pepper; Holly and Hudson; Buddy. Photography by Kirsty Pilkington.

P.9 CLIENT SERVICES REPORT (CONTINUED)

Guide Dog Client Story

Wendell is the fourth Guide Dog for a client in the South, who has this to say about her recent placement:

“Given my last dog passed away under very sudden and traumatic circumstances, I was extremely nervous and somewhat ambivalent about training with Wendell. As it has turned out, my fears were unfounded. The flexible, but thorough nature of the training, and the fact that Wendell is such a well-behaved dog both in and out of harness, has helped to ease the loss of my previous dog. We have travelled extensively during our short time together, both in Hobart and interstate and have enjoyed it immensely. I can’t thank Royal Guide Dogs Tasmania enough for giving me Wendell and restoring my independence and self confidence” - client EB, Hobart.

Life Skills and Other Services

RGDT delivered a range of services through our Lifeskills programs. Our services were developed for individual needs and goals, within the person’s home and community.

Low Vision Rehabilitation Services delivered included support with adaptive/assistive technology; assessment and training with mobility aids, including Guide Dog placement; orientation skills training in home, community and schools; support and information services for clients, family and the community; vision enhancement including assessment and use of equipment and training with daily living skills and equipment.

To this end, we are proud to report that our support has derived many positive outcomes and these include supporting individuals to safely and independently access their home and community, provision of equipment that has also given opportunity for greater independence in activities of daily living and have provided information and resources to a large number of people.

This Page: Guide Dog Wendell, in February, who was matched with a client towards the end of the year. Both members of the team have settled in very well together.

Opposite Page (left): The bare foot bowls group together after an enjoyable and social activity day in October.

Opposite Page (right): A snapshot of one of three promotional films produced by RGDT for International White Cane Day, in October.



Through RGDT student activity days, some students and their families had an opportunity to experience bare-foot bowls, which is an increasingly popular activity for people of all ages. Most sports can be easily adapted for a person who is blind or vision impaired, and bare foot bowls is no exception.

The introduction to lawn bowls was kindly hosted by Buckingham Bowls Club New Town. The event provided a great opportunity for parents and students to socialise, support each other and experience a new sport. The students particularly enjoyed the 'kids against parents' competition and the BBQ held afterwards was also welcomed.

As a final note, I would like to pay tribute to a number of individuals and families closely working with the organisation, up to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for 12-18 months. I would very much like to thank all the volunteer Puppy Raisers and Boarders, without whom we literally would not have Puppy Development or Guide Dog Programs. We are truly appreciative of the enthusiasm, effort and good humour each and every Puppy Raiser contributes to the care, well-being and socialisation of our pups.

Mary Langdon
Client Services Manager



P.11 FUNDING DEVELOPMENT REPORT



The Royal Guide Dogs Tasmania Funding Development Department works extremely hard and punches well above its weight, with only 2.6 full-time-equivalent staff working across the state in the areas of fundraising, public relations, marketing, media relationships, and corporate partnerships.

We have fared reasonably well in our fundraising efforts this year, given the broader economic climate in which we operate. Once again, a substantial part of our operations would not be possible without the support and dedication of our volunteers who drive, count, fold, stuff, clean, repair, deliver and collect. Their support ensures our small team of fundraising and public relations staff can focus on reaching our outcomes, which in turn enable the delivery of sustainable services to Tasmanians who are blind or vision impaired. Our fundraising and administrative volunteers include over 30 regular individuals; some of whom have been supporting us for over 10 years.



Projects

The major fundraising projects for the year continued to raise income and awareness for Royal Guide Dogs Tasmania. They included:

- Collection Dogs
- Puppy Banks (Public Relations Program)
- Direct Mail
- Raffles (Telemarketing)
- Puppy Love (Sponsorship and Regular Giving Program)
- Pepper & Paddy Puppy Appeal



Public Relations

The PR activities and events for 2012/13 included:

- Agfest*
- Hobart Myer Christmas Pageant*
- Wrest Point Pooches @ the Point
- International Guide Dog Day*
- International White Cane Day*
- Facebook
- New puppies' arrival in December and March *
- Pepper & Paddy Puppy Appeal*
- Cutie Pups @ Cutie Cups
- Souper Dogs @ Liveat
- Hawthorn FC visit to Launceston office*
- Old Beach Vintage Car Show
- Coles for Pups Day at Coles Sandy Bay
- RGDT Volunteer Thank You Function*



(*RGDT has been very fortunate to receive consistent support from all of our local media outlets and we will continue to develop these relationships as we introduce new activities, projects and events.)

Supporters

We look back proudly on our efforts in a busy and successful year, when we focused carefully on developing and implementing cost effective, engaging and creative projects that raise awareness and funds to ensure RGDT can provide extremely high quality services to Tasmanians. We thank all of our supporters; be they Corporate Partners, individual donors, Puppy Love sponsors and members, and those who have left gifts to RGDT in their Estate.

You are all critical in allowing the organisation to complete our Mission and we are sincerely grateful.

Kate Grady
Funding Development Manager

*This Page, clockwise from right:
Souper Dogs, supported by Liveat in July;
A special web-based thank you for Volunteer Week in May;
Part of the puppy line-up for International Guide Dog Day in
April- Dexter, Indi, Pepper and Guide Dog Wendell.*

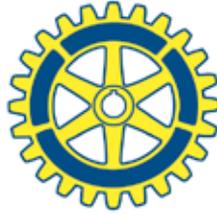


*Opposite Page, from top:
Krystal Watson teaches Hawthorn footballer Sam Mitchell a thing
or two about using a white cane in March;
PR officer Zoe Polacik with Guide Dog Ambassador, Dexter, out
and about in April;
Prime real estate positioning for the RGDT site at Agfest in May;
Cutie pup, Wendell, at Cutie Cups in April.*



2012/13 Puppy Love Partners

CommonwealthBank



Rotary Club of Central Launceston

2012/13 Royal Guide Dogs Tasmania Partners



Heartgard³⁰ Plus
Works like a treat.

FRONTLINE
Recommended by Veterinarians
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Along all differences
Rappaw Prints



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coles

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