

Australia Pacific Islands Disability Support

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Ross House, Melbourne, Victoria on 14th November 2009

Present: Daniel Stubbs (Chair), Sally Baker, Andy Calder, Robert Putland, Chris Rhodes, William Jolley, Deborah Rhodes, Robyn James (minute taker)

Proxy vote: Frank Hall-Bentick, Penelope Price, Riette Voogt, Shirley James, Albert James, Angeline Chand, Bruce James, Sally Sewell, Sue Salthouse, Thea Bates, Mary Henley-Collopy, Kate Nelson, Kerry Snell, Heidi Forrest, Virginia Jealous, Ingrid Van Steenwyk, Lorraine Mar, Joanna Casey, Neva Wendt

Observer: Chris Hagarty,

Apologies: Maryanne Diamond, Theresa Jolley, Bridget Jolley, Liz James, Lou Sbalchiero, Christine Walton, Alan Davis, Frances Gentle, Ros Hayes

The meeting commenced at 4.05pm.

1. Welcome

Daniel Stubbs welcomed all to the meeting, and expressed gratitude to Lesley Hall and all at Australian Federation of Disability Organisations for providing us with the venue for the meeting

2. Minutes of 2007/08 Annual General Meeting

The minutes were distributed to all members following the 2008 AGM and also available on the website.

It was moved William Jolley and seconded Chris Rhodes that the minutes are accepted as a true and accurate record.

3. President's Report

Daniel spoke to the President's Report.

Points raised were:

- Securing and building on partnership with Pacific Disability Forum
- Involvement of APIDS with Australian Disability and Development Consortium
- Involvement of APIDS with Leadership training with Disabled Peoples Organisations (DPOs)
- Input of APIDS into AusAID disability and development policy
- Securing of tax deductibility status

Please refer to the attached report for details.

4. Secretary's Report

Robyn James spoke to the Secretary's Report, which provided more detailed information on the some of the points raised by the President, as well as information about partner DPOs, member update and relationship as an ancillary fund with World Relief Australia.

Please refer to the attached report for details.

4. Treasurer's Report

William Jolley distributed the Audited Accounts and spoke to the Treasurer's Report.

Income and Expenditure Statement for the period 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009

Item	2009 (\$)	2008 (\$)
Revenues from ordinary activities		
Members' joining fees	20.00	400.00
Donations	18,400	2,550.00
Other Income	1.50	0.00
Total income	18,421.50	2,950.00
Less Expenditure		
Administration	2,724.75	289.30
Project grants	0.00	2,500.00
Total expenditure	2,724.75	2,789.30
Net profit from ordinary activities	15,696.75	160.70

Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2009

Item	2009 (\$)	2008 (\$)
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	17789.50	4,593.05
Debtors	0.00	0.00
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	17,789.50	4,593.05
OTHER ASSETS		
Property & Equipment	0.00	0.00
TOTAL OTHER ASSETS	0.00	0.00
TOTAL ASSETS	17,789.50	4,593.05
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors	0.00	0.00
Unpaid project grants	0.00	2,500.00
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	0.00	2,500.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES	0.00	2,500.00
NET ASSETS	17,789.50	2,093.05
Opening balance	2,093.05	1,932.35
Net profit/(loss)	15,696.75	160.70
Closing balance	17,789.80	2,093.05
EQUITY	17,789.50	2,093.05
Retained earnings	17,789.50	2,093.05

William Jolley moved that the auditor's report was accepted. It was seconded Deborah Rhodes. The motion was passed unanimously.

5. Election of Directors for 2009-2012

The following nominations were made to fill the seven vacancies:

Sally Baker
Maryanne Diamond
Robyn James
William Jolley
Kate Nelson
Deborah Rhodes
Daniel Stubbs

As there was no election required, it was moved William Jolley, seconded Robert Putland that the meeting proceed by not appointing a returning officer. The motion was passed unanimously.

Daniel congratulated all Board members on their new appointment or re-appointment.

The meeting was closed at 4.40pm

President's Report

It has been another great year for the Australia Pacific Islands Disability Support (APIDS) Inc. I am pleased to say we have been able to assist several of partner organisations of people with disabilities (DPOs) which is something that Robyn James will report on in detail in the secretary's report. We have:

- secured and built on the partnership with the Pacific Disability Forum (PDF); continued to support the Australian Disability and Development Consortium (ADDC);
- been involved in the development and implementation of AusAID's new disability and development policy.

Most excitingly however we have secured tax deductibility status.

The APIDS partnership with PDF continues to grow and strengthen. In early 2009 the majority of the APIDS board attended the PDF regional meeting in April in Vanuatu and I believe we were able to provide significant assistance to PDF and many participants. This included assisting with the write up of the final communiqué, provision of training and other presentations, and assistance with constitutional reform processes. We also took this important opportunity to have several meetings with each of our partner organisations to discuss their future plans and how we might assist.

APIDS has been contributing to the development of ADDC. The ADDC is an organisation of development organisations with a specific interest in disability issues. It is a recently formed organisation with the purpose of promoting good disability and development practice. I represent APIDS on the ADDC Executive. Our vice President Deborah Rhodes provides ADDC excellent input and advice through her role as Chair of its Policy Committee.

In September 2008 we supported the first ADDC conference. This land-mark disability and development conference was held in Canberra and enjoyed presentations from Deborah Rhodes, Maryanne Diamond and myself. Given APIDS' unique relationships with DPOs throughout the Pacific held special status and a high profile at the Conference. It was rewarding to see Pacific DPOs taking pride of place and dominating proceedings- partly due to APIDS' leadership.

Immediately following the ADDC conference was the leadership training for DPOs provided jointly by APIDS and People With Disabilities Australia (PWDA) - sponsored by the Australian Leadership Awards Fellowship (ALAF). This training did provide some important opportunities for development of leadership skills among DPOs in developing countries. The APIDS team however concluded that such training would be better provided in-country in future as the needs of different DPOs are quite diverse and it would be better to work with local groups in local settings.

In late 2008 AusAID released its policy on disability and development 'Development for all'. I am proud to say that APIDS input in to the consultation process is quite evident in much of this policy. Although there are some parts which I remain uncomfortable, such as the section on reducing disability as this is a health issue, it is overall a very good policy and one with which we will seek to hold the government to account. Since then I was fortunate to see one aspect of implementation at the regional meeting of disability ministers in the Cook Islands where Parliamentary Secretary Bob McMullen reinforced AusAID's approach as following this policy.

The wonderful milestone for APIDS during 2008-09 was securing tax deductibility status with the Australian Taxation office (ATO). Part of this involved the Establishment of the APIDS Foundation Trust which is the vehicle by which we must spend money that is given to APIDS as a tax deduction. the Trustees are Bill Jolley (APIDS treasurer), Dr Ernie Antoine and Rev Andy Calder. That you also to our founder Albert James. I speak on behalf of the whole APIDS board when I say that we are extremely grateful to these individuals for their work in assisting this process. And even though the Trust and our tax deductible status is only around six months old we have seen benefits already in terms of significant donations to APIDS to benefit DPOs throughout the pacific.

Particular thanks is owed to Robyn James for her tireless work as secretary and keeping the organisation running many ways. Thank you to Bill Jolley for his excellent and thankless work as Treasurer - particularly as we enter the more complex world of tax deductibility status. Special thanks also to Deborah Rhodes and Maryanne Diamond, our two other invaluable board members, who have continually supported and lead the organisation's work at home and abroad.

Daniel Stubbs
President

Secretary report 2008/09

2008/09 was a year of hard work and achievement for APIDS, which was made extra special as we met all of our partners at some stage.

Partner DPOs

Our relationships strengthened with our 8 existing partners, Fiji Disabled Peoples Association (FDPA), Te Toa Matoa (Kiribati), PNG National Assembly of Disabled Persons, Nuanua O Le Alofa Inc (Samoa), Disabled People Association of Solomon Islands, Kra'as Hadomi Timor Oan (Timor Leste), Naunau 'o e Alamaite Tonga Association and Disability Promotion and Advocacy Association (Vanuatu).

We commenced discussions with three new partner organisations in Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru and Tuvalu. We were also approached by an organisation in the Cook Islands which is working at becoming the DPO for that country.

There were no grants made to our partners in this financial year. However, we provided many with assistance with other activities of DPOs, such as planning, letter writing and assistance with submission writing. This was provided to Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Timor Leste.

Members

At the end of June, there were 81 individual members, 2 organisational associate members and 2 organisational reciprocal members.

By jurisdiction, these are:

Victoria	42
NSW	12
ACT	10
QLD	7
Fiji	4
WA	3
Mauritius	2
TAS	1

One newsletter was sent to members and other interested people in December 2008.

There was a fundraising drive to members in June 2009.

Website

The website www.apids.org has 22 pages, including a page for each of our partners. Hits on the site until the end of June were approximately 2,000.

World Relief

In order to be able to obtain deductible gift recipient (DGR) status and to be able to offer tax deductibility for donations from members and supporters,

APIDS became an ancillary fund of World Relief Australia Inc (WRA) in 2008. All funds which we raise and send to our partners is sent through WRA, who organise all bank transfers, for an administration fee.

While this has increased our administration costs, we are able to raise funds at a much higher rate than we could without the DGR status. And you will see in the next financial year that we are able to provide significant grants to our partners.

Pacific Disability Forum (PDF)

PDF is the regional organisation that advocates on behalf of people with disabilities in the Pacific. APIDS and all of our partners are members of PDF. PDF is a key organisation with which APIDS works closely.

In April 2009, 4 Directors and 4 members (in their professional capacities) attended a PDF Conference and Annual Meeting in Vanuatu. This was invaluable for learning of the strengths and challenges of most of our partners and developing closer personal and working relationships.

Australian Disability and Development Consortium (ADDC)

A major activity for most of the Directors was the ADDC Conference held in Canberra in September. Dan, Deborah and Maryanne all had active roles at the two day Disability and Development Conference as speakers, workshop facilitator and content summariser. I was part of the organising committee and was responsible for coordinating transport, volunteers and the conference kit. Many of our Pacific partners presented papers at the Conference. The Conference was attended by all members of the AusAID Disability Task Force, officials from international development agencies and many other organisations. The day after the conference a Policy and Action Roundtable and Consultation was held for International Participants. Deborah and Maryanne were facilitators for the day.

This was another opportunity for us to learn from and with our partners.

ALAF

In September/October 2008, 21 people from the Pacific and Asia (most of them with disabilities) spent four weeks undergoing a leadership development program funded through the AusAID Australia Leadership Award Fellowship (ALAF). People with disabilities from all of our partner DPOs participated in the program and APIDS was proud to facilitate one week in Mount Macedon (Victoria) as well as coordinate the activities for a week in Melbourne.

Deborah's partner – Ernie Antoine – planned and was the key facilitator at the Mount Macedon program and Deborah, Dan and Robyn were co-facilitators.

It was an important time for us to learn more about the situation for people with disabilities in each of the countries represented, as well as to contribute our skills and experience in improving the leadership abilities of the participants.

AusAID disability strategy

APIDS Board members individually met with Mr Bob McMullan, the Parliamentary Secretary for International Development in August to discuss AusAID's Disability Strategy. We also met with the members of AusAID's Disability Task Force as the Strategy was developed.

APIDS prepared a formal submission in the development of the strategy in consultation with partner DPOs and PDF. The main point that we stated and reinforced is that APIDS believes that Disabled Peoples Organisations must be empowered to meet the objectives that they have prioritised for people with disabilities in their own countries. In order to do this effectively, appropriate resources need to be provided. These resources include but are not limited to training, funds, and support/networking opportunities.

We were delighted to be invited to attend the official launch of AusAID's Disability Strategy – called Development for All: Towards a disability-inclusive Australian aid program, 2009-2014 - in Canberra on 25 November. It was an emotional event, given all the effort and lobbying that had been dedicated to the process. We were especially delighted that a representative from one of APIDS' partners in Solomon Islands was asked to make an official speech after the Parliamentary Secretary – she did an excellent job.

The highlight of my work as part of APIDS is the friendships that have been forged with partners and other directors; we work well together and enjoy the social time as well.

There were three formal meetings in 2008/09, one using email, and two in person. As in other years, there were also frequent email exchanges in decision- making that did not require formal meetings.

I would like to sincerely thank all Directors, DPO partners, staff of PDF and members once again for their great support in 2008/09.

Robyn James
Company Secretary
November 2009