

Supporting a life of choice.



Rural Lifestyle Options Australia

www.rloa.org.au



Sunset at Lake Moogerah, Scenic Rim, Queensland



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WHO WE ARE

OUR MISSION

Supporting a life of choice.

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia (RLOA) enriches the lives of people with a disability by creating choice, opportunities and skills for life. RLOA is a registered NDIS provider in QLD, ACT, NSW, VIC and TAS. RLOA is proud, to have been providing support, to families and people with disabilities within rural communities for over 24 years.

OUR VALUES

- We build authentic connections.
- We believe in lifelong learning.
- We are compassionate.
- We are empowering.
- We are respectful.
- We are innovative.

OUR CULTURE

- We dare to dream and do things differently.
- We understand rural and regional communities.
- We employ a person centred approach.
- We believe in establishing authentic connections for the people we support.
- We operate within an environment of continuous improvement.

CEO AND CHAIR UPDATE

It has been a year of major organisational change and reform for RLOA in preparation for the transition from state-based grants programs to the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

We have proven that our organisation was up for the challenge and we are very confident that our decision to diversify and seek new service markets will be advantageous for our continued future growth.

This journey would not have been possible if it weren't for the dedication and commitment of our most valuable resource, our people, and we would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge everyone's input in realising our mission. It is our pleasure to highlight some of the successes that have been accomplished during the past 12 months such as:

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

RLOA has achieved a significant milestone by gaining registration

from NDIA to provide a range of service offerings in Queensland, New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory, Victoria and Tasmania.

Given the varying transitions for NDIS in each of these jurisdictions, there will be a measured approach to where new RLOA offices and our targeted service offerings will be established in the coming year.

Improving our Brand Awareness

The RLOA website has evolved over time and it has been refreshed to reflect our national focus and it is already proving to be quite effective in drawing interstate enquiries about our service offerings under NDIS.

Professional Workforce

It is a highly competitive market with many organisations seeking suitable staff to provide the necessary services in the disability sector. Despite the limited pool of potential staff, RLOA has continued to attract

highly skilled and qualified employees who are aligned to our culture, our mission and vision for the future and who are energised to continue to innovate and provide quality services to participants.

We continue to select new employees based upon a values selection model which has proven to be successful. We can now boast a vibrant culturally diverse workforce which is testimony to our commitment to greater inclusion for all within the community.

Investing in our People

We do not lose sight of why we are here - to provide the best possible service to our participants. Hence our focus on attracting and maintaining quality staff is paramount. We have committed to securing a suitability qualified and skilled workforce and as a result we are proud to say 96% of the workforce are permanent part-time and full-time employees. This financial year, eight employees were acknowledged

for exceptional practice through our Above and Beyond award recognition program as well as issuing nine employees recognition for outstanding efforts post cyclone Debbie and the impacts from flooding to our region.

Additionally, we sponsored nine employees memberships to peak bodies to ensuring our staff are abreast of the latest industry trends, information and access to mentors and networks. Our commitment is to extend this opportunity to all employees next financial year.

We extend our appreciation to every staff member, sponsor and director who has helped us in our endeavours this financial year.



Carole Caswell
Chairperson



Michelle Latailakepa
Chief Executive Officer

FINANCE UPDATE

Financially speaking it has been a challenging year with the commencement of transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in June 2017. A number of projects were completed this year which required a large investment in resources both monetarily and in our staff's time. These projects were implemented to make RLOA ready and compliant with the digital requirements of NDIS.

Because of our efforts, RLOA has been transformed from a largely paper based delivery platform to one being a digital Information Communication Technology platform which has already proven to reduce our overheads and operational costs.

RLOA has invested a significant amount of time and money into training our staff. This has had the effect of making the service delivery opportunities for RLOA scalable which positions us very well to take advantage of markets in other geographical areas.

The hard work in preparing for NDIS meant that resources that would normally have been allocated to income producing outcomes such as grants and service contracts were expended on negotiating our contract with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). This process involved negotiating not only with NDIA but with various State Government Disability Service Departments.

Because each State has a separate agreement with the Commonwealth, RLOA had to negotiate with each State separately to gain its approval as a condition precedent to NDIA approval.

This has a manifest impact on revenue. The transition to NDIS commenced in June 2017 where we supported participants with NDIS approved plans.

The investments made on our Information Communication Technology have allowed RLOA to successfully move from an in advance block funded business

model to an in arrears business model which better manages our cashflow. We are extremely well placed in the market to substantially increase revenue in the new financial year.

Several strategic initiatives were implemented over this financial year. Our increase in advertising to attract highly skilled employees and investment in advertising and brand awareness will grow the business. Results will be evident next financial year.

Several independent auditors have commented that RLOA is better prepared for the transition to NDIS that most of the other organisations they audit nationwide.

This financial year the Board chose to subsidise transport for our participants to the tune of \$276,717. This is an unsustainable practice and will not be continued under NDIS.

We would like to acknowledge the following organisations that provided financial and in-kind support during this financial year:

- Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services
- Department of Health
- Google Grant
- Scenic Rim Regional Council
- Bentleys Chartered Accountants
- Specsavers Beaudesert
- Vista Print

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Carole Caswell
Chairperson

BSocStud (UQ) MAASW

Carole is the Chair of Rural Lifestyle Options Australia and one of the co-founders of the organisation. Carole is a retired Social Worker and her career within the human services sector spanned from working for the Veterans Affairs, Immigration, and Defence Departments. She was psychiatric Social Worker at Greenslopes Repatriation Hospital and supervisor for the University of Queensland Social Work field education unit. Before retiring in 2005, Carole was the Queensland Regional Director of the Defence Community Organisation. In 2007, Carole was awarded the Australian of the Year Local Hero Regional Queensland for her voluntary work in the disability sector. Carole is a member of the Board's CEO Review and Remuneration Committee and Governance Taskforce.



Ann Armstrong
Vice Chair

Ann is the Vice Chair and Public Officer of Rural Lifestyle Options Australia and one of the co-founders of the organisation. Ann has an extensive background in small business and is a member of the Board's Governance Taskforce.



Robyn Taylor
Company Secretary
Director

MAICD

Robyn is the Company Secretary and Director of Rural Lifestyle Options Australia and one of the co-founders of the organisation. Robyn is a retired Primary School Teacher and her career has seen Robyn teach in schools all over Queensland. Prior to her retirement in 2015, Robyn held executive positions within Education Queensland as Acting Deputy and Acting Principal on numerous occasions. Robyn is a member of the Board's CEO Review and Remuneration Committee and Governance Taskforce.



Cheryl Stephan
Director

Cheryl is a Director of Rural Lifestyle Options Australia and one of the co-founders of the organisation. Cheryl is a qualified Special Education Teachers Aide, for Education Queensland and started her career in 1983 which continues today.



Rita Darragh
Director

Rita is a Director of Rural Lifestyle Options Australia and one of the co-founders of the organisation. In the past, Rita played an integral role in the fundraising activities for the organisation. In 2015, Rita was awarded the Commonwealth Bank Australia Treasurers Award. Rita is a member of Board's Governance Taskforce.

SUPPORTING

INNOVATION

STRATEGIC PLAN 2016/17

1. Expand our services

To all people with a disability seeking our services.

- 1.1 Expand our catchment areas and participants.
- 1.2 Expand our services to include a range of NDIS offerings.
- 1.3 Develop our social enterprises.
- 1.4 Secure alternative income streams.
- 1.5 Actively seek diversification opportunities.
- 1.6 Increase our brokered services by expanding partnerships.

2. Empower our people

Provide positive influence and outlook to our changing work environment.

- 2.1 Create opportunities for acknowledgement of excellent practice.
- 2.2 Maintain a contemporary framework for learning and development for all staff.
- 2.3 Encourage self-development of staff.
- 2.4 Encourage and promote staff skills and personal attributes.
- 2.5 Match support worker's skills, strengths, talents and interests to people receiving services.

3. Engage our community

Be actively involved in community development and engagement.

- 3.1 Continuous improvement of Service Delivery within the NDIS model.
- 3.2 Establish and maintain authentic connections for participants within the community of their choice.
- 3.3 Assist the participants to become self reliant through informal networks.
- 3.4 Create opportunities to give back to local communities.
- 3.5 Encourage and promote social participation.

4. Ensure our sustainability

Create a sustainable organisational structure that demonstrates value of our services.

- 4.1 Monitor for quality and value our unit costings for all our Service Delivery models.
- 4.2 Identify and develop our systems.
- 4.3 Restructure RLOA accordingly to meet its changing requirements.
- 4.4 Strive to reduce our operating costs and overheads for efficiency.
- 4.5 Broaden our income base to include multiple funding sources.

5. Encourage motivation

Have progressive and purposeful services that meet identified needs of current and future participants.

- 5.1 Redevelop services in line with participant requirements.
- 5.2 Maintain feedback opportunities for all people receiving services.
- 5.3 Encourage a culture of lifelong learning.
- 5.4 Deliver innovative services, supports and responses.

6. Positive partnerships

Develop our partnerships and increase our brand awareness.

- 6.1 Expand our supporter base and attract additional sponsors.
- 6.2 Increase our social media presence.
- 6.3 Increase exposure through community events and media outlets.
- 6.4 Develop and cultivate alliances, collaborations and consortia to expand service coverage.

Guided by experience

RLOA has a highly skilled and qualified Senior Leadership Team with over 100 years of collective experience working across the Financial and Human Services sectors.

Senior Leadership Team
(left to right)

Janette Sweedman
General Manager Service Delivery

Michelle Latailakepa
Chief Executive Officer

Elena Charlton
General Manager Strategy and Innovation

David Gordon
Chief Financial Officer

Senior Leadership Team

www.rloa.org.au/ourleaders



THE FUTURE IS HERE



NDIS Transition Team 2017 (pictured)

In April 2015, RLOA's NDIS Transition Team was formed. Over the past twelve months, in order to adapt to the growing needs of the organisation, the membership has grown with the drive, dedication and focus of the team remaining resolute. As a result, RLOA is [#ndisready](#) as the roll out of the NDIS continues across all regions.

ACCOMMODATION & Lifestyle Support

A man with a beard and short dark hair, wearing a light green t-shirt, is smiling as he hangs laundry on a line. He is using a green clothespin. The laundry includes a purple shirt, a white shirt, and a bright green shirt. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a stone wall and some furniture.

52,630

**Hours of support delivered
in 2016/17**

Success, People and Culture

What we do is just as important as how we do it.

Above and Beyond Awards

At RLOA, we appreciate the efforts staff make, and recognise those who go the extra mile for our participants and colleagues. Nominations for the Above and Beyond Award are submitted by co-workers to the Senior Leadership Team who assess nominees against a specific criteria. Where exceptional practice has been demonstrated, the staff member is presented with a framed certificate by the CEO. Recipients of this award receive a \$50 Coles Group and Myer Gift Card, feature in our Annual Report, bi-annual Newsletter and across our social media pages.



**Recipients for the
2016/17 Financial Year.**

Noah Kumara
August 2016

Nicholas Power
August 2016

Caroline Bond
October 2016

Rebecca Scaysbrook
October 2016

Janette Sweedman
October 2016

Dillon Reilly
June 2017

Samantha Foster
June 2017

Shane Ferguson
June 2017

In their own words...

"Seeing my efforts were being recognised was a nice token of appreciation from the organisation."

Nicholas Power
National Marketing Manager

"I was surprised and delighted to receive my award. It was so nice to be recognised for something I love doing."

Shane Ferguson
Service Manager

"Coming into this industry I didn't expect any pats on the back so to see that my effort was acknowledged was pretty surreal to be honest."

Dillon Reilly
Lifestyle Support Worker

STAFF SNAPSHOT

RLOA values our workforce and this is demonstrated by our commitment to wherever possible offer employees permanent positions.

As a result **96%** of the workforce are permanent part-time or full-time employees.

There has been an increase in the number of recruitment activities by **3.6 times** this financial year to meet the demands of the growing workforce.

100% of employees completed Disability Induction Modules 1- 7

32% of direct support staff attended Management of Actual or Potential Aggression Training

75% decrease in Workplace Injuries

84% of employees hold a Certificate III or higher tertiary qualification

21% of employees hold a Bachelor Degree or higher tertiary qualification

100% of all direct support staff completed a staff profile illustrating their skills, hobbies, likes and interests which allows for better matching of staff and participants.

RLOA implemented family friendly rosters which also allowed staff to complete study by having time off to attend exams, attend placements and achieve their qualifications and life-long learning goals.

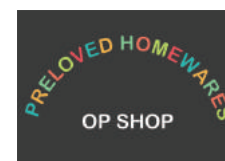


Rural Lifestyle Options Australia is committed to making a positive impact in the communities in which we operate, both now and in the future. This year, the organisation engaged in a number of social initiatives aimed at promoting awareness of causes and inclusion in the community. In November 2016, a group of staff and participants participated in *Movember* which involved the team growing moustaches to raise awareness for men's health issues.

In February 2017, RLOA participated for the second year running in *Feel Good February* which for the duration of February involved staff and participants hosting a weekly event for the community in which they would spread a message of kindness. Highlights included RLOA hosting a free lemonade stand for the public; handing out complimentary flowers on Valentine's Day. The organisation also hosted an art workshop with the final artwork later being donated to another community organisation, *Inala Place* by PresCare.

In April 2017, RLOA went blue for *Autism Queensland*. During April, RLOA held an event for participants encouraging attendees to dress in blue and provide a gold coin donation to assist with research and promotion of contemporary supports for people who are living with autism. In May 2017, the organisation hosted an *Australia's Biggest Morning Tea* for the *Cancer Council* with donations contributing to cancer research, prevention and support services.

For the second year in a row, RLOA continued its partnership with *AWLQ Op Shops* donating any items we were unable to stock in our *Preloved Homewares Op Shop*. To see photos from throughout the year of RLOA's commitment to having a positive impact in the communities in which we operate check out the [#RLOAGivesBack](#) hashtag through our social media pages.





Thank You Carer's Morning Tea 2016

In October 2016, in celebration of National Carer's Week, RLOA hosted a Thank You Carer's Morning Tea at Albert River Winery, Tamborine. The morning commenced with a delicious Devonshire tea amongst sweeping views of the Mountains of Tamborine. Four lucky door prizes were donated to RLOA by sponsors in Brisbane. After the lucky door prizes were drawn and morning tea was over, guests were treated to an exclusive guided tour by Yvonne through the historic colonial homestead Tamborine House, a sheep dog trial demonstration, animal feeding, whip cracking demonstration and competition, and a boomerang throwing competition. RLOA were proud to sponsor this event to acknowledge and pay tribute for the outstanding contribution made by the 2.8 million unpaid carers across the country.

HOUSING AND Support Program



3,527

Hours of support
delivered in 2016/17

Feedback

I am very happy to be here and hope I can make a positive contribution towards the organisation into the future.

Very lucky to work with such an amazing group of people, everyone is always willing to help and are so friendly.

I am grateful for the opportunity I have been given to work amongst a great team of like-minded and passionate support workers, excellent participants and their families.

I enjoy coming to work in the morning and knowing I am making a difference in the lives of the people I support.

The Annual Participant, Families and Staff Satisfaction Survey

Key responses:

83%

of participants felt positive about being involved in a community of their choice.

81%

of participants felt positive about being involved in making their own choices and decisions.

100%

of participants felt involved in the planning of their supports and services.

93%

of parents and carers felt positively toward the physical environment of RLOA.

78%

of parents and carers felt positively toward the general atmosphere of RLOA.

SUPPORTING

GROWTH

Marketing Snapshot



www.rloa.org.au

(Between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017)

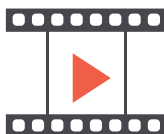
30,810 page views
13,522 unique users



Over **998,000**
Twitter impressions



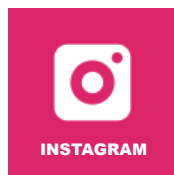
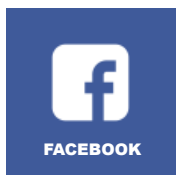
906 Facebook Likes
12.5% growth since last Financial Year



Over **5,000** minutes of online
video watched

Over **8,000** total online video
views

Connect with us on...



Our Stories

In case you missed them, this year we met...



Luke

Luke shared with us his likes and interests and showed us around his new living arrangement.

Jackie

Jackie shared with us her hobbies and even let us sit in on a Team RLOA Quota Meeting where she is the Vice President.



Adam

Adam with assistance from his mother took us for a tour of his home and invited us along for a trip to the supermarket.

Martin

Martin with assistance from his sister shared with us his love for Mowing, Car Washing and all things Johnny Cash.



www.rloa.org.au/ourstories

How can you help?

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia is strengthened by the good will of volunteers and the support of businesses and the community to enable it to continue supporting people with a disability to live a life of their choice.

There are a number of ways you can help Rural Lifestyle Options Australia achieve its mission of Supporting a life of choice.

These include but are not limited to:

Making a donation to our various projects we welcome:

- Monetary
- In-kind goods
- Pro bono services

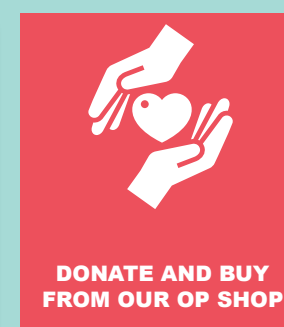
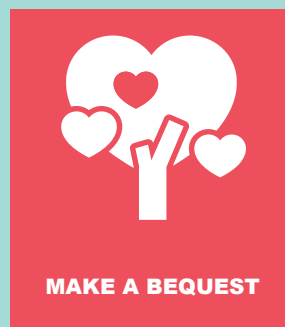
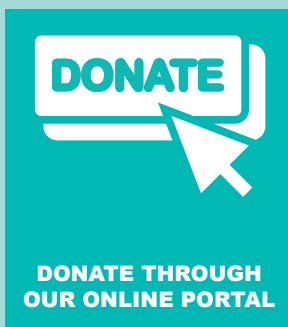
Supporting our fundraising through:

- Making individual, tax-deductible donations through our PayPal window or at RLOA Main Office.
- Including Rural Lifestyle Options Australia in your company's Workplace Giving Program.
- Encourage employees to make regular, tax-deductible donations to Rural Lifestyle Options Australia through payroll deductions.
- Gifts
- Sponsorships
- Making a bequest
- Donating and purchasing products from our *Preloved Homewares Op Shop*

Supporting our organisation through:

- Following our Social Media pages (Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and Google+)
- Subscribing to our Monthly e-blasts.

For more information on becoming a supporter and/or a donor, contact Rural Lifestyle Options Australia on **1300 032 175** or send an email to enquiries@rloa.org.au



ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

SUPPORTING A LIFE OF

CHOICE

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia

1300 032 175

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