



Rural Lifestyle Options Australia
Community Service Provider



2020-2021

**Annual
Report**

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia Ltd (RLOA) acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia.

We recognise the traditional custodians of the lands on which our company is located and where we conduct our business.

We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders both past and present.

RLOA is committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.

Constitution

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee under the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth). Rural Lifestyle Options Australia is a Public Benevolent Institution (PBI) and is endorsed with a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). Rural Lifestyle Options Australia is registered as a charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia Ltd
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Who We Are

For almost 30 years, Rural Lifestyle Options Australia's personalised services have given people and their families in rural and regional communities more choice, control and independence.

Our support opens up a world of possibilities and experiences and we do it together, one person and one life goal at a time. This has been our driving focus since 1993, when our not-for-profit organisation was established by a group of families in Beaudesert.

While today, the footprint of our organisation has grown significantly, we distinguish ourselves from the pack, by remaining true to the vision of our founders who strived for more options and opportunities for their loved ones living with disability. Staying true to our ethos of **'locals supporting locals'** we are always on the lookout for passionate people who embody our values to join our team, as we continue to grow our services into the rural and regional communities that need it most.

Our Mission

Building inclusive communities and valuing the contributions and unique talents and rights of all.

Our Promise

We live by the motto "Big enough to provide the service, small enough to look after you."

Our Vision

Changing lives, stronger communities.

Our Values

- We are committed to authenticity.
- 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 people we support.

Chair & CEO Update

Transformation is a process and change is a constant.

I think we can all agree that the 2020/2021 financial year has brought its fair share of ups and downs. Snap lockdowns, government regulations and stay at home orders are just some of the hurdles, we as Australians, have all had to experience to keep each another safe from COVID-19 over the past twelve months.

Unsurprisingly, Rural Lifestyle Options Australia (RLOA) has not been spared from facing such feats. But as always, we have banded together to ensure our organisation continues to thrive into the future with the best interests of the people we support and their families, front of mind.

I would like to acknowledge that the efforts of all staff have not gone unnoticed throughout this period, with everyone wearing many different hats to ensure the smooth continuity of delivering on our mission of "Building inclusive communities and valuing the contributions and unique talents and rights of all". Often in rural and regional communities, employment opportunities are overlooked so this financial year we were delighted to continue to employ locals in the regional areas in which we operate.

The pandemic called on us all to evolve and change some of the ways in which we deliver services which required us to transform our traditional model of supports to meet Government and Health Authority Safety guidelines. No matter how our services have been modified, our vision of 'Changing lives, stronger communities' continues to remain resolute.

The uncertainty of COVID-19 drew the country's awareness to everything that was outside of our control. This led to us as an organisation re-aligning our focus to what we could control; and I truly believe we have set in motion opportunities which will safeguard the future of the organisation for many years to come. With the full impact of COVID-19 and its economic impact remaining uncertain, we have adopted an agile planning and budget process to ensure we continue to build an adaptable and resilient organisation which continues to support people with a disability and their families across rural and regional communities.

This financial year saw the organisation grow to support 333 participants under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). I truly believe that our approach to Service Delivery being sharply focused on what matters most, the individual, has resulted in this outcome.

This period also saw our organisation launching a new Intranet to promote more open communication and stronger staff engagement within a largely remote workforce spanning across two states. All staff members join the Intranet when they start with us as part of our new onboarding process, and it has truly allowed us as an organisation to be more transparent and more responsive to the needs of our workforce.

This year we continued to drive positive social impact, to give back to the communities in which we operate and to support other causes separate to our own. Staff, participants and families participated in:

- Feel Good February
- Movember
- NAIDOC Week 2020
- World Mental Health Day
- National Apology Day
- International Women's Day 2021
- Close The Gap Day
- Caring for Carers Emergency Relief Program
- RU Ok Day
- National Sorry Day
- National Carers Week
- National Reconciliation Week 2021

Staff were also supportive of worthy causes such as the RSPCA Cupcake Day and Animal Welfare League Queensland. These are just some of the social initiatives, our organisation has been delighted to support over the past twelve months.

This financial year also saw Rural Lifestyle Options Australia investing in software solutions which will assist us to deliver more effective services within the ever-changing landscapes of COVID-19 and the NDIS. This software will allow us to be more responsive and mobile during future lockdowns, which will be of great benefit when deploying changes across the various Local Government Areas in which RLOA operates. In addition to this, we invested significant resources into the professional development of our workforce which includes the purchase of a new Learning Management System which houses hundreds of different online courses, that our complete workforce will have access to and benefit from.

Although we did incur a small loss this financial year through our investment in technology, RLOA are pleased to say that we did not have to turn to Government Schemes such as JobKeeper to keep the wheels of our operations turning.

We are confident that the steps we have taken over the past twelve months in relation to our investment into our technology and workforce, will revolutionise the way we do business and we look forward to measuring its impact over the next twelve months.

We would just like to say thank you to the people with disability, their families, their guardians and their carers, who continue to choose RLOA to be their service provider of choice. To our loyal supporters, sponsors and funding partners, we would also like to thank you for your continued support this financial year, which will ensure RLOA can continue to provide essential services both now and in the future.



Carole Caswell
Chairperson



Michelle Latailakepa
Chief Executive Officer



Governed by Experience

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia has a highly skilled and qualified Board of Directors who are committed to providing governance as well as setting and safeguarding the strategic direction of the organisation.

The RLOA Board is responsible for the governance of the organisation. Its key roles include setting the strategic direction of the organisation, and ensuring our strategic goals are achieved within budget. The Board also oversees Risk Management while providing strong executive oversight and leadership. The Board is committed to providing the highest standards of corporate governance to ensure that RLOA is sustainable, effective, and focused on its strategic goals. The CEO reports to the Board and is responsible for the day-to-day management of the organisation, leading a team of professional staff in supporting all participants to live a life of their choice.



Carole Caswell
Chair



Ann Armstrong
Vice Chair



Chris Leck
Director



Dirk Melton
Director



Katrina Ryan
Director

Board of Directors

Carole Caswell (Chair)

Ann Armstrong (Vice Chair)

Dirk Melton (Director)

Chris Leck (Director)

Katrina Ryan (Director) *Retired April 2021*

| Directors' Meetings | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Number eligible to attend | Number attended |
| 11 | 11 |
| 11 | 11 |
| 11 | 10 |
| 11 | 10 |
| 8 | 5 |

| Strategy and Risk Committee Meetings | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Number eligible to attend | Number attended |
| - | - |
| - | - |
| 4 | 4 |
| 4 | 4 |
| - | - |

| CEO Review and Remuneration Committee | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Number eligible to attend | Number attended |
| 2 | 2 |
| 2 | 2 |
| - | - |
| - | - |
| - | - |

Financial Performance

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 30 June 2021

| | 30 June 2021 \$ | 30 June 2020 \$ |
|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Operating Revenue | 9,675,841 | 8,641,883 |
| Other income | 34,687 | 48,899 |
| Employee benefits expense | (8,818,633) | (7,525,846) |
| Depreciation and amortisation expense | (229,588) | (245,861) |
| Bad and doubtful debts expense | (9,719) | (16,582) |
| Rental expense | (51,356) | (58,885) |
| Advertising and marketing expense | (136,874) | (145,948) |
| Client support services expense | 13,166 | (7,748) |
| Computer expense | (86,047) | (77,773) |
| Fundraising expense | (2,287) | (1,227) |
| Insurance expense | (42,078) | (30,578) |
| Motor vehicle expense | (55,747) | (35,737) |
| NDIS plan management expense | (3,080) | (5,158) |
| Printing and stationery expense | (16,950) | (13,571) |
| Professional fees | (134,638) | (124,087) |
| Repairs and maintenance expense | (41,549) | (39,573) |
| Telephone and utilities expense | (64,992) | (71,375) |
| Other expenses | (325,292) | (165,432) |
| Interest expense | (19,484) | (25,794) |
| Surplus / (Deficit) for the Year | (314,620) | 99,607 |
| Other Comprehensive income for the year, net of tax | - | - |
| Total Comprehensive income for the year | (314,620) | 99,607 |

\$9,675,841

Total Revenue for 2020-2021

12% growth compared to 2019-2020 Financial Year



Our update on Reconciliation

The 2020/2021 Financial Year saw Rural Lifestyle Options Australia take the next step forward in relation to our commitment to reconciliation.

Our vision for reconciliation is one where all Australians come together in unity, understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and non-Indigenous cultures. An Australia where equality and equity is part of the Australian consciousness, and where all of Australia's peoples work together towards a common and united future for the benefit of all. The majority of this period saw our Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group (RWG) meet bi-monthly to develop a plan which would ensure the organisation had a clear vision for reconciliation to strive toward in consultation with Reconciliation Australia. On Thursday, 18 March 2021 we were thrilled to officially receive endorsement from Reconciliation Australia for our 'Innovate' Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), our second formally endorsed RAP framework. This RAP builds on valuable learnings from our reconciliation journey to date and outlines all our reconciliation initiatives for the next two years. As part of the development of any RAP, one of the key components involves engaging an Indigenous artist to create an artwork piece and story to complement our vision for reconciliation.

We are thankful to have engaged Nathan Falk from the Ngemba Mob and Wiradjuri Nation, who developed a unique piece titled 'Saltwater Freshwater Connection' which encapsulated the theme of our vision for our RAP. Thank you to Nathan for writing 'Saltwater Freshwater Connection' and for creating a beautiful piece of artwork which now lives at our Northern Rivers Office. The day also coincided with National Close The Gap Day, which saw morning tea events held across our offices in both South East Queensland and Northern New South Wales. Attendees at the events were encouraged to join more than 250,000 people who had taken action for Indigenous health equality by signing a petition which called on the Australian Government to commit to providing adequate and long-term financial recourses to achieve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health equality. In May 2021, the RWG organised a Virtual Afternoon Tea in recognition of National Sorry Day (26 May 2021) and National Reconciliation Action Week (27 May – 3 June 2021). Staff and participants all joined the Virtual Morning Tea through Zoom to acknowledge the shared histories, cultures and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as part of our commitment to reconciliation in Australia. During the event, attendees heard the story of Sheila Humphries, one voice of the Stolen Generations, who, as a child, was taken from her parents and placed in an orphanage by authorities who thought they knew best. Sheila's story reinforced the importance of progressing reconciliation and served as a reminder to us all that we need to take braver and more impactful action to play our part in elevating the voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia will continue to be proactive in contributing to reconciliation and acknowledge and remember the wrongs of the past so that they are never repeated. We are driven to ensure culturally appropriate supports are provided to people living with disability and that our workforce is as inclusive and diverse as the communities we support. We hope you will continue to follow Rural Lifestyle Options Australia, as we continue our reconciliation journey as we strive towards a common and united future for the benefit of all.



Looking Back



Our Year In Review

Our Workforce

166 total staff

BREAKDOWN BY EMPLOYMENT TYPE

32

Full Time

122

Permanent Part Time

12

Casual



16

Participants

11

Homes

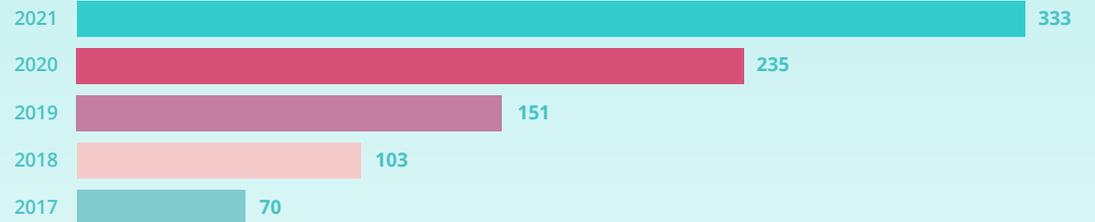


282,570km

travelled by RLOA vehicles

Our Participants

Number of people we supported:



Supported Independent Living Arrangements

Above & Beyond Awards

Nominations for the Above and Beyond Award are submitted by peers to the Rural Lifestyle Options Australia Executive Team who assess nominees against a set of criteria. Categories for consideration include Teamwork, Going the Extra Mile, Customer Service, Professional Development, Infectious Positive Attitude, Creativity and Innovation, Performance Excellence, Leadership, Commitment and Flexibility.

Where exceptional practice has been demonstrated and the nomination is supported by the Rural Lifestyle Options Australia Executive team, the staff member is presented with a certificate by the CEO. Recipients of this award also receive a \$100 RLOA Gift Card which can be used at a variety of major retailers, feature in our Annual Report, bi-annual Magazine and across our social media pages.



Website Analytics

VISITORS

12,799
Total Visitors

SESSIONS

17,820
Total Sessions

Google Ads

AD IMPRESSIONS

93,300
Ad Impressions

AD CLICKS

6,090
Ad Clicks

Social Media Statistics

FACEBOOK

1,834
Total Facebook
Followers

LINKEDIN

146
New LinkedIn
Followers

Years of Service Awards



AMY TABERNER



VANESSA BLOTT



THOMAS MAYO



Cheryl Colton

**17.5 YEARS
OF SERVICE**



Kelly Crumblin

**15 YEARS
OF SERVICE**



Our Supporters

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia would like to gratefully acknowledge the below stakeholders who have generously assisted us throughout the 2020/2021 Financial Year and played a vital role in bringing our latest Unfunded Projects to fruition.

Community Grants

- Beaudesert RSL Club Community Sponsorship Program **\$2,000**
- Brisbane Broncos Charity Fund **\$3,000**
- Gambling Community Benefits Fund **\$19,750**
- Play For Purpose In-Kind Social Amplification Campaign **\$1,500**
- Scenic Rim Regional Council Community Grant **\$4,595**
- Google Adwords Grant **\$120,000**

Corporate Sponsors and Supporters

- A-Plus Vets Beaudesert
- Beaudesert Specsavers
- Beaudesert Bulletin
- Bentley's Chartered Accountants
- Birnum Rural Fire Brigade
- Brisbane Broncos Charities Fund
- Frank and Ruth Ellis
- Scenic Rim Earth Moving
- Play For Purpose Charity Raffle





Ronald immerses himself in the atmosphere at the Brisbane Broncos vs Sydney Rabbitohs, Rural Lifestyle Options Australia Dedicated Charity Game at Suncorp Stadium on Thursday, 17 June 2021.



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