



Women
With
Disabilities
(Australia)

Winner Australian Human Rights Award 2001
Winner National Violence Prevention Award 1999

WWDA Annual Report 2001 – 2002

WWDA Presidents Report By Helen Meekosha

Since the last AGM, we have been primarily concerned with reshaping the structure, governance, and operational management of WWDA with a view to developing a more efficient and viable organization whilst maintaining our involvement in the broader disability movement and women's groups. A high priority has also been continued work in lobbying governments and the wider community on behalf of disabled women.

At the last AGM, a working party made up of myself, Annie Parkinson from Sydney and Kate List from Canberra were given the task of retaining the executive function whilst undertaking a review. My thanks go to Annie and Kate for helping me shoulder this responsibility. Reviewing the organisation became necessary as a result of several crisis-packed years of uncertain funding, insufficient funds to operate as a national peak body doing both systemic and individual advocacy, along with growing demands on limited staff time and energy. Unlike many other peak organizations WWDA is committed to having a broadly based individual membership and an organisational membership. We would like to see triennial funding introduced for peak bodies in the disability sector, which would give us, as an organization, the opportunity for planning and would give our employees some job security. We will continue to lobby for this goal.

As part of the WWDA review we held an extremely important weekend 'Think Tank' in Sydney. With the help of Julia Wolfson, our facilitator, who donated her time and expertise, a group of us took on the task on generating a set of recommendations which are being put to the 2002 AGM. It was an exhausting but profitable weekend and I feel we made good progress on rethinking how to progress our work at a time of government withdrawal from support for NGOs and increasing discrimination against those on the margins of society, which includes many disabled women.

The primary goal of WWDA was articulated as systemic change for all women with disabilities in Australia and the underlying philosophy of the organization remains one of self-determination. In practice, this translates into an organization run by and for women with disabilities. However, we can do longer undertake individual advocacy and we must be mindful that the growing role of the organization at a national and international level must not be at the expense of staff burnout.

The winning of the Human Rights Award in December 2001 was a fitting recognition of the work that WWDA members and staff have been dedicated to over the years. The acknowledgement by the judges was timely. It was a very moving day for all of us who were able to attend the awards.

Thanks to Carolyn Frohmader, our Executive Officer who despite health challenges during this year has continued to show a steadfast commitment to women with disabilities. Congratulations to Carolyn on her success in her own personal reproductive planning. We look forward to the forthcoming event, which, I am sure, will be widely broadcast on WWDA Discuss. Thanks to Angela Court, our part time Office Manager who has been doing a sterling job reorganising the office in Hobart and getting work systems up and running over the past year.

Finally, thanks to all the WWDA representatives around the country for their input into various working parties, advisory bodies and fora. Special mention must be made of the telecommunications working party, especially Sue Salthouse, for tireless efforts involved in ensuring accessibility in this important area.

WWDA Executive Director's Report By Carolyn Frohmader

WWDA has had another busy year. Our efforts over the past 12 months have concentrated on developing a new national structure for the organisation, including a review and update of our constitution. At the AGM in 2001, a Working Party was established with the specific task of

undertaking a review of the organisation, researching new organisational structures, and updating the Constitution. As part of this work, WWDA held a "Think Tank" in Sydney in April 2002, which was attended by WWDA delegates and invited 'experts'. This forum was very successful, helping us to focus on what the organisations strengths were, and what we could realistically achieve on such a small operational grant. The Think Tank also looked closely at the pros and cons of various organisational structures, and a preferred model for WWDA was developed from this process. We are very appreciative of the time given to us by the delegates at the Forum, in particular the invited 'experts' who gave us a weekend of their own time free of charge.

As Executive Director, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our President, Helen Meekosha for her support and guidance over the past year. I would also like to thank the Working Group of Helen Meekosha, Annie Parkinson and Kate List for all their work over the past 12 months. Thanks too, to all those WWDA members who have undertaken representative work on behalf on WWDA. And finally, a big thank you to Angela Court, who has worked tirelessly and efficiently in the WWDA Office, and provide me with great support.

Summary of Main Activities

Human Rights Award

One of WWDA's most significant achievements for the past year has been the winning of the National Human Rights Award (Community Category) in December 2001. In presenting WWDA with the Award at a function in Sydney on International Human Rights Day, the judges said:

"...WWDA has achieved an enormous amount in a short period of time, working tirelessly on behalf of one of the most marginalised and disadvantaged groups in Australia. Areas in which it has worked assiduously include unlawful sterilisation of women and girls with disabilities, reproductive health, violence against women with disabilities, and leadership and mentoring. Although it has a domestic focus, WWDA has provided inspiration for women with disabilities all over the world, receiving letters of thanks from as far away as the Ukraine and the USA."

The judges were impressed by the broad base of WWDA's work and influence and the range of methods used to advocate for women living with disabilities, from lobbying to education. They said WWDA deserved ongoing recognition and was a valuable and visible organisation.

The Award was presented to WWDA at a function in Sydney in December. Many WWDA supporters came along to the presentation. Helen Meekosha (WWDA President) accepted the Award and gave a powerful acceptance speech.

Input into Government Consultations

WWDA has provided input to a range of government, non-government and industry processes, reviews, consultations, over the past 12 months. We have not had as much input into the Governments Welfare Reform process (Australians Working Together) as expected, due to the fact that this was put on hold as a result of the Federal election. Examples of input to Government consultations etc include:

- Ongoing input to the Australians Working Together (AWT) Strategy; in particular providing advice to the Communications Strategy for AWT;
- Dissemination of AWT Newsletter to WWDA members and the broader disability sector;
- Publishing of AWT information in the WWDA Newsletter (June 2002);
- Submissions to the Federal Government's Australian's Working Together Strategy (Listening to the Community). WWDA representatives also participated in the Australian's Working Together Consultation processes.
- Input and feedback to Government on policy related to status of women, including the development of a women's information portal; and input to the Federal Government Report to the UN Convention on the Elimination of the Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW);
- Input to the development of Standard Commonwealth Government Legal Contracts.
- Submission provided to the FACS Electronic Service Delivery Consultation.
- Submission to the Regional Telecommunications Inquiry.

Major Publications

During the past year, WWDA has published two major publications: "Moving Forward" - Sterilisation of Women and Girls with Disabilities (October 2001) and "There is no Justice – Just Us!" – The Status of Women with Disabilities in Australia' (July 2002). WWDA's publication "Moving Forward" - Sterilisation of Women and Girls with Disabilities (Oct 2001) has received recognition worldwide, including a major review in the International Journal of Pregnancy & Parenting. "Moving Forward" has received favourable reviews in several international and national academic journals, as well as newsletters of both women's and disability organisations. In

April 2002, a WWDA delegation met with the Human Rights Commissioner (Sev Ozdowski), HREOC personnel, a representative from the Sex Discrimination Office, and OSW staff to discuss strategies to progress the recommendations from "Moving Forward". In February 2002, WWDA wrote to the Attorney General requesting he reconvene the AG's Discussion Group on Sterilisation. A response from the AG in September 2002 indicates that WWDA will be invited to this meeting when it occurs, and that "Moving Forward" will be discussed at that meeting.

"There Is No Justice – Just Us" – *The Status of Women With Disabilities in Australia* was published in July 2002. This major report focuses on the status of women with disabilities in Australia and the directions needed to address the issues currently faced by women with disabilities in Australia. The report has been well received and is selling well. It has generated a lot of interest from overseas organisations.

For the period July 2001 – June 2002, WWDA has received **\$3,282.13** from sales of publications.

WWDA News

Published Issue 19 of WWDANews in June 2002 (80 pages) which was widely disseminated to all members and other key stakeholders. The Newsletter has been very well received. Issue 19 of WWDANews cost us approximately \$10,000 to produce (includes postage costs of \$2,500).

Australian Federation of Disability Organisations

WWDA has participated in the Working Party of the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations. In relation to the establishment of the Australian Federation of Disability Consumers, WWDA's contribution to date has included:

- the establishment, facilitation, management and maintenance of an email listerv (disfed) for the Disability Federation Working Group;
- writing the Project Brief and Draft Workplan for the Consultant;
- writing the legal contract between the Federation Working Group and the Consultant;
- writing General Terms and Conditions for the contracting of Consultants;
- writing a draft Position Description for the Federation CEO;
- providing written responses to questionnaires distributed by the Consultant;
- providing feedback and comments on the draft Constitution for the Federation;
- providing the Consultants with a copy of WWDA's Constitution for reference;
- participating in a series of telephone meetings with the Federation Working Party, as well as telephone meetings with personnel from the

Commonwealth Department of Family & Community Services (FACS) National Secretariat Program;

- developing proposal for a process to establish membership of the Federation Board.

In mid 2002, WWDA also undertook consultations with the broader disability sector on preferred models for membership for the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations. At the time of this report (September 2002), the Australian Federation of Disability Consumers has not been incorporated, therefore WWDA is yet to become a voting member.

WWDA Email List (wwda-discuss)

The WWDA Email Discussion List (wwda-discuss) currently has 165 subscribers. The majority of subscribers are individual women with disabilities, although there are also several disability (and other) organisations which subscribe to wwda-discuss, including a number from overseas. WWDA is subscribed to Pamelas List (the email list of all national women's organisations); Ozadvocacy (the national disability rights email list); Disfed (the email list of the Disability Federation Working Party); and AWHN – List (the Australian Women's Health Network email list).

WWDA Website

The WWDA Website continues to be very popular. Over the past year, the WWDA website has averaged 9209 hits per month. (This figure represents individual visits, not number of hits). The average number of hits per day is 297, with the maximum number of hits per day 466. The most popular pages on the website are: About WWDA; Sexuality; Violence; WWDA Articles, although the figures are spread relatively evenly across all of the pages of the website. This indicates that users are accessing most of the WWDA website once they get to the site. Users of the website come from many countries, with the majority coming from Australia and the United States. The other countries represented in the usage statistics include: Canada, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Japan, Spain, Netherlands, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, France, Germany, South Africa, Italy, Indonesia, Sweden, Argentina, Brazil, Czech Republic, Hong Kong, Russian Federation, Switzerland, Chile.

Presentation of Papers, Conferences Attended etc

Over the past year, WWDA members have represented the organisation at a number of Conferences, seminars etc. A number of papers have been presented. Conferences etc attended include: The Diversity Conference, Deakin University; The International Seminar on Social Welfare in Asia and the Pacific, Tokyo, Japan; The E-networking Conference, Monash University; Equity and Diversity Conference,

Melbourne; The Digital Divide Network Conference ACT; NSW Benevolent Association Leadership Forum; Commonwealth Disability Strategy Forum, Canberra.

Helen Meekosha (WWDA President) has been invited to give a keynote address on "*Toward the Adoption of UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*" on 21 October in Osaka, Japan, at the International Forum on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

National Disability Studies Research Institute (DSARI)

WWDA is a co-founder of the National Disability Studies Research Institute (DSARI) which was established late in 2001. WWDA is the community representative on the DSARI Board, and is represented in this role by Helen Meekosha.

WWDA Telecommunications Working Group

The WWDA Telecommunications Working Party, chaired by Sue Salthouse, has had a very successful year. The Working Group has been successful in securing a further grant from the Commonwealth Department of Communication, Information Technology and the Arts (DOCITA). The members of the Working Party currently represent WWDA on a number of industry fora, including: Australian Consumer Industry Forum (ACIF) Disability Advisory Board; ACIF Consumer Advisory Group; Telecommunications Disability Consumer Reference Group (TEDICORE); Telstra Disability Forum (Consumer Chair and Co-ordinator); Telstra Disability Equipment Program Consumer Advisory Group; ACT Community IT Advisory Panel.

Global Fund for Women

WWDA has only received one lot of grant funding in the past year. Again, the funds were provided to us by the Global Fund for Women, an organisation based in the USA. The funds received from the Global Fund for Women were used to pay for the "Think Tank" held in Sydney in April, and also to print WWDA's report "*There is no Justice – Just Us!*" – *The Status of Women with Disabilities in Australia*' (July 2002).

WWDA Treasurer's Report By Carolyn Frohmader & Angela Court

The WWDA Audit Report for 2001-2002 is enclosed in this document. The Audit Report can be briefly summarised as follows:

WWDA received a total income of \$167,629 in the 2001-2002 financial year. The bulk of this income was made up of WWDA's operational grant (from the Commonwealth Department of Family & Community Services) and two smaller project

grants, one from the Commonwealth Department of Communication, Information Technology & the Arts (for the Telecommunications Consumer Representation Project), and the other from the Global Fund for Women USA (a general purpose grant utilised by WWDA for the "Think Tank" and the publishing of the "Just Us" Report). WWDA received \$2,754 in membership fees and \$3,247 from sales of WWDA publications. Only \$420 was received from donations.

WWDA's total expenditure for the year was \$182,205, which meant that WWDA spent a total of \$14,576 more than the amount of income received. The \$14,576 came from WWDA's savings.

The major items of expenditure for WWDA over the 2001-2002 year were: salaries (\$82,869); travel and accommodation (\$21,551); printing (\$14,583); telephone and faxes (\$9,425); rental costs (\$6,171). A total of \$9,845 was spent on insurance, workers compensation and superannuation costs. Postage and freight accounted for \$3,824. To give an explanation of these items:

- travel and accommodation expenses are much higher than in previous years because they include the cost of the WWDA NEC Planning Day (in Canberra 2001) and the WWDA Think Tank (in Sydney 2002). The WWDA Think Tank was paid for from the Global Fund for Women grant, and the WWDA Planning Day was paid for from WWDA Membership funds.
- the printing expense of \$14,583 includes the cost of the WWDA Newsletter (and incorporates graphic design, printing and postage because the one company did the entire job – the postage component of the WWDA Newsletter was \$2500). The printing expense also includes the printing of the "Just Us" Report which was paid for through the Global Fund for Women grant.
- the telephone and faxes expense of \$9,425 also incorporates monthly email charges, web hosting fees, phone line installation and rental costs. Telephone and faxes expenses are down \$4,683 on the 2000-2001 financial year, where the expense was \$14,108.
- insurance costs for the organisation have increased over the past year by \$1194. The cost of insurance for WWDA in 2000-2001 was \$872 and in the 2001-2002 year, this increased to \$2,066. This was due to the fact that the cost of public liability and volunteers insurance increased dramatically. Superannuation expenses increased by \$1379. In 2000-2001, the cost of superannuation was

\$5,119, increasing in 2001-2002 to \$6,498. Workers compensation costs increased by \$288, from \$993 in 2000-2001 to \$1,281 in 2001-2002.

As at 30 June 2002, WWDA had total assets of \$86,986 and total liabilities of \$38,992. This resulted in a Net Asset total of \$47,994. An amount of \$21,999 of this net asset total is held in a Cash Management Account.

WWDA Telecommunications Consumer Representation Working Party Report – By Sue Salthouse, Co-ordinator, Telecommunications Group

The WWDA Telecommunications Group now consists of the following WWDA members: Louise Bannister, Vanessa Cini, Margaret Cooper, Margherita Coppolino, Joyce Deering, Jo-An Partridge, Sue Salthouse, Christine Tilley.

The following members represent WWDA on telecommunications organisations:

- (a) Vanessa represents us on the Australian Consumer Industry Forum (ACIF) Disability Advisory Board, and the ACIF Consumer Advisory Group;
- (b) Margaret represents us on the Telecommunications Disability Consumer Reference Group (TEDICORE); and
- (c) Sue represents us on the Telstra Disability Forum (of which she is Consumer Chair and Co-ordinator); the Telstra Disability Equipment Program Consumer Advisory Group; and the newly formed ACT Community IT Advisory Panel.
- (d) ACIF is forming a new Consumer Advisory Council, and Vanessa made a nomination application for member of the Telecommunications Group to represent WWDA on that Council.

In March 2002, 3 new members were added to the Group to undertake research into aspects of telecommunications affecting women with disabilities.

- (a) Margherita is undertaking a web/literature search into assistive equipment, virtual (cyber) communities and general telecommunications developments. In addition she began to liaise with the TEDICORE Executive Officer (Gunela Astbrink) to summarise the progress of Disability Action Plans with other telecommunications carriers. However, Gunela has not been able to devote any time to this, and no progress has been made. The Optus DAP is the only one, besides Telstra, to have lodged a DAP on the HREOC site;
- (b) Jo-An Partridge is undertaking research into Digital Divide Initiatives in Victoria; and

(c) Louise Bannister is undertaking research into Digital Divide Initiatives in the ACT.

In July, Jo-An, Margherita and Margaret attended an E-networking Conference at the Caulfield Campus of Monash University. This conference was devoted to examining Digital Divide Initiatives worldwide. Our representatives chose seminars which may have application to development of models for women with disabilities.

An obligation under the grant deed has been to seek alternative sources of funding for the WWDA Telecommunications Group. To this end, Christine has approached a number of telecommunications organisations and carriers for sponsorship. There have not been any positive replies as yet. Sue has approached the National Information Communications and Telecommunications Australia (NICTA) Centre of Excellence (located in Canberra) to form a Business Community Partnership with WWDA.

Sue has also asked NICTA to form a consumer consultative group for its operations, and offered WWDA support in forming such a group. No reply has yet been received.

Feedback from DCITA for our Interim Report was positive, and even contained praise for the amount of, and calibre of work being done. DCITA officers asked Sue for some advice and clarification of some statements made in applications for the 2002/2003 Grants (something of a compliment).

The current Grant period is until 30 September, with the final report due on 31 October.

We have been successful in winning a Grant to continue this telecommunications representation work for WWDA in 2002/2003. The next Grant is for \$10,700.

The Disability Studies and Research Institute (DSaRI) Report - By Helen Meekosha

As President I have been representing WWDA as a Director on the Foundation Board since the beginning of 2002. WWDA was a foundation member organisation of DSaRI. In addition to my normal duties as a company director I have ensured that a gendered perspective is taken into account in all the activities of the Institute, especially in the research projects both proposed and undertaken. There are currently three men and two women on the Board.

What is DSaRI?

The Disability Studies and Research Institute (DSaRI) undertakes research into disability issues

from a social perspective, and promotes community debate associated with the rights of disabled people. The Institute involves stakeholders from organisations of people with disabilities, universities, the research community, service delivery bodies and industry. It aims for a wider understanding of the social causes and responses to processes that disable people with impairments, and promotes their participation in the social, economic, cultural and political life of the nation.

What does DSaRI do?

The Institute undertakes a range of functions, including:

- basic and applied research;
- collaborative research in conjunction with community, academic and industry partners;
- policy debate through policy submissions, papers, public forums and conferences;
- education;
- mentoring and development of people.

As at incorporation in June 2002, DsaRI was involved in collaborative research activities with:

- The University of New South Wales Social Policy Research Centre
- The University of Western Sydney
- The University of Technology Sydney
- Private sector companies
- Disability NGOs

For clients that include:

- NSW State government
- Queensland State government
- University of New South Wales

And on projects including:

- Disability, war and peace
- Services for students with disabilities
- Family support services
- Costs of disability provision
- Education standards and disability
- Website evaluations

Who runs DSaRI?

The Institute is managed by a Chief Executive Officer, under policies determined by a Board representing stakeholders. The Institute is currently building a strong membership base of organizations and individuals, and a number of members' committees – research and policy, education and publications. The Institute is located at one of the stakeholder institutions, though operates in different locations, depending on the projects involved.

How can I join DSaRI?

DSaRI has five categories of membership – each category jointly nominates a member of the Board. The membership categories are:

1. Universities and university research groups, centres etc.
2. Individual researchers
3. Organisations of people with disabilities
4. Disability policy and service delivery organisations
5. Industry

Full details of membership and operation of the Institute can be found in the constitution.

Address: 52 Pitt St Redfern NSW 2016

Tel: 02 9319 6622

Website (temporary) DsaRI

http://www.cts01.hss.edu.au/DSARI/DSARI_home.html

Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Standards Project Steering Committee Report - By Joyce Deering

I have only attended one meeting this year, in Adelaide in February, as advice of the previous meeting somehow passed WWDA and myself (as the representative) by. There was a change of coordinators with the resignation of Maurice Corcoran late in 2001 to take up a position with the South Australian Government. After advertising and selection processes, Paul Larcombe took up the position as Coordinator in December 2001, to begin a steep learning curve which he survived to organise the meeting in Adelaide in February which was well attended and got through a lot of business.

Despite the Transport Standards going to Federal Parliament in December 2001, it did not get debated and has just made the list again. Expectations are that this will go through and that all States and Territories will follow and enact similar legislation quickly.

The Draft Education Standard was presented by Sandy Seymour and Graham Smith, and this Standard was to be presented and debated by all State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers at a MCYEETA meeting in Auckland in July. Ministers expressed concern over the delay in finalising the Draft due to legal and financial issues to be further addressed by December 2002.

The Access to Premises Standard and supported technical work is continuing, and workshops were presented in each State and Territory earlier in 2002 to both advise the Standards and to get feedback from all stakeholders.

The Employment Standard has not had work done for some time, though it is hoped that this will be possible when other work is completed. Likewise the Expression of Interest for an Accommodation Standard and a Communications Standard.

Top End Division of General Practice Consumer Reference Group Report - By Joyce Deering

The meetings of the Top End Division of General Practice Consumer Reference Group (CRG) have changed to bi-monthly and I have attended most, although several have coincided with other regular meetings. The CRG gives reports on members activities and also receives reports on the Division's activities. An Aboriginal Mental Health Program and an Aboriginal Health Workers Program are two of the many Programs the Division is working with, and reports are given to the CRG on progress. There is also an Immunisation Catch Up Program receiving funding from the Federal Government and run by the Division.

A representative from the Consumers Health Forum gave a presentation at a recent meeting. Ongoing work on closer liaison between GP's and the Royal Darwin Hospital has enabled our group to be actively involved in giving ideas to get better results in this area and ensure all areas of hospital facilities are operating well.

Centrelink Disability Customer Services Reference Group Report - By Margherita Coppolino

In the past 12 months, I have attended the following Centrelink meetings:

Sydney 6th August 2001
Canberra 19th Oct 2001
Canberra 8th March 2002
Sydney 12 & 13 June 2002

This period has covered issues on Australian Working Together Framework, Proposed New Work Capacity Assessment Model and the Changes to Disability Support Pension. Other References Groups have been set-up in other areas of Centrelink eg. Unemployment, using the same model as the Disability Reference Group.

Recently, I was elected by the Centrelink Disability Customer Service Reference Group to represent them on the Australians Working Together Centrelink Reference Group in which I attended my first meeting in mid August this year.

Report on the Meeting of National Disability and Other Peak Bodies to discuss Proposed changes to the Disability Support Pension Eligibility - By Sue Salthouse

WWDA was represented by Sue Salthouse at the meeting of peak disability bodies held at Parliament House on 19 June to discuss proposed changes to the Disability Support Pension. The meeting was convened by ACOSS. The initial discussion centred around the whether or not to hold a Press Conference that day, and if so, when to hold it. With others, I opposed the holding of the Press Conference before we had had an opportunity to discuss the issues. However, this was overruled and it was decided to hold the Press Conference during the lunch break. Appropriate notices were then issued to the Press. Spokespeople for the Press conference were then decided:

General discussion then ranged over a number of issues:

- Lack of jobs for people with disabilities (pwd)
- The Government agenda, to reduce the number of people on the Disability Support Pension (DSP) by 21,000 per annum over three years. Representatives wanted information as to how that seemingly arbitrary figure was arrived at. Opinion was that the Government had simply set the \$\$ saving it wanted, and set the figure accordingly.
- Much discussion on how the Government policy ran counter to the recommendations of the McClure Report.
- It was strongly felt that the criterion for eligibility was far too stringent, in that the capacity to work for the equivalent of 2 days per week will render a pwd ineligible for the DSP. Working 2 full time days would be impossible for many pwd. Whilst spreading the workload over 5 days could mean uneconomic outlay in terms of transport to and from work.
- The Government's concern about the increase in numbers of people on the DSP was not justified. Partly the increase has come about because of previous Government policy in classifying people, whereas the Government wants to place the blame on 'false' claimants.
- I moved for a statistical evaluation of how much the increase could be attributed to population growth, and the increase in percentage of people now classified as having a disability. For example, if 15% of the population were classified as pwd a decade ago this would amount to 'x'

people on the DSP. Today the overall population has increased, and there are 19% classified a pwd.

It was then decided to break into a number of smaller groups to discuss the issues from different perspectives.

- **Barriers to employment and social participation** (looking at physical access to workplace, workplace support, transport, role of Disability Employment Services ((DES), availability of assistive equipment.
- **Assessment of Work Capacity** (identifying attitudes to employment of pwd, including education of employer, employee, community; giving financial incentives to employers and employees; identifying organisations which have inclusive policies eg. IBM and Telstra; identifying policies to promote employment of pwd which are working.
- **Cost of Disability** (I was in this group, and found that the discussion was directionless, and actually got bogged down on barriers to employment. We did not decide on terms of reference and have had no further contact since then, so that the July deadline has passed.

Press Release drawn up by those representing us at the Press Conference, and Press Conference held during Lunch Recess.

Presentation by Politicians

- **Wayne Swann** (Labour) emphasised need to use the Mc Clure Report as the basis for reform. It was disappointing that he was not able to outline a Labour Policy, and that they are simply being reactive to Coalition's moves.
- **Lyn Allison** (Democrats) also talked about basing reforms on the recommendations of the McClure Report. Likewise, she could not outline a Democrat policy.
- **Amanda Vanstone** (Liberal) launched into an aggressive diatribe against all and sundry, starting off with the State/Territory recalcitrance on refusing to meet her demands to table their spending allocations, before agreement on the Commonwealth state/Territory Disability? Agreement (CSTDA) can be reached. Amanda outlined the reform proposals as (a) tightening the access criteria, (b) like NZ, using 15 hours work per week at award rates as the eligibility criteria for **new** DSP, (c) that existing DSP recipients be re-assessed. She reiterated that the DSP should be for people with 'severe' disability. the current number on DSP is

620,000. The policy to remove 3% per year from the DSP may result in the person being moved to another payment, eg Parenting Payment ! or giving carers the Carer Payment ! (thereby making the pwd dependent on the Carer, burdening the Carer, and pushing the pwd out of community participation – Sue). Amanda outlined the generosity of the Government, in that their contribution under the CSTDA will rise from \$1.9billion to \$2.7billion over 5 years; they are putting increased \$\$ into the disability area; Gov't will fund an additional 73,000 places in DES.

Conclusion

Since the legislation was not passed, there has not been any follow-up so far. However, the Government is about to introduce a 'new' Bill, which appears identical to the original with one exception. The second Bill proposes that those receiving the DSP up to 30th June 2003 will continue to be assessed under the old rules, but any applications (or re-application) after 30 June 2003 will be subject to much harsher conditions. The Labour Party continues to object to the harshness of the eligibility criteria, and states that the starting date for their introduction is irrelevant (Communication from Annette Ellis, 26 August 2002).

WWDA Management Committee 2002-2003

The WWDA Management Committee for 2002-2003 are:

- Helen Meekosha – nominating as individual member
- Annie Parkinson – nominating as individual member
- Sue Salthouse – nominating as individual member
- Margie Charlesworth – nominating as individual member
- Pamela Menere - nominating as individual member
- Samantha Jenkinson – nominated by Victorian Women With Disabilities Network
- Therese Sands – nominated by People With Disabilities NSW
- Christine Tilley – nominated by the Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of Queensland
- Joyce Deering – nominated by Integrated Disability Action Inc

The WWDA Public Officer for 2002-2003 is Sue Salthouse of the ACT.

Ratification of Changes to WWDA Constitution

During 2001-02 WWDA undertook a review of its structure, governance and operational management processes. One of the outcomes of this review has been the updating of the WWDA Constitution ('the Rules'). A copy of the proposed Rules has been made available (on request) to all current financial members of WWDA. A Special Resolution was considered and ratified at the WWDA 2002 AGM. The Special Resolution was as follows:

"that the Incorporated Association adopt the rules tabled at the meeting (and signed by the Chairperson for the purpose of identification) as its rules in substitution for, and to the exclusion of, the existing rules."

Partners & Directors: D.W.STEEELE F.C.A. M.J.BURNETT B.Com., F.C.A. K.A.NELSON B.Com., C.A.	Steele Burnett & Nelson CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS STEELE BURNETT & NELSON SERVICES PTY LTD ABN 36 009 552 694	Level 3, 6 Bayfield Street, Rosny Park, Tas Postal Address: P.O. Box 28, Rosny Park, 7018 Tel: (03) 6244 5044 Fax: (03) 6244 7319 Email: sbn@sbnaccounting.com.au
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**Department of Family and Community Services
Audit Certificate**

Program Funding Recipient: Women With Disabilities (Australia) Incorporated
Type of Funding: National Secretariat Program

Statement of Income and Expenditure for the period: 01/07/2001 to 30/06/02

I have audited the financial statements of the organisation for the period indicated and provided answers to the following questions. Where a "No" answer is given I am providing an accompanying note to the certificate.

13.	I have read the Conditions of Program Funding under which payments have been made to the organisation by the Department of Family and Community Services for the audited period.	Yes
14.	I am satisfied that all payments made to the organisation by the Department of Family and Community Services in, or for, the audited period were spent for the agreed purpose(s) or, if not yet fully spent, have been accounted for in the audited financial statements.	Yes
15.	I am satisfied that the organisations observed all Condition of Program Funding relating to the organisations audited financial statements.	Yes
16.	There were no other matters of a material nature that came to my attention, other than those noted in my audit report.	Yes

Name of Engagement Partner: Derek Steele

Signature of Engagement Partner



Name of Audit Firm: Steele Burnett & Nelson
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