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Supporting and transforming the community of dispute resolution practice by providing leadership, direction and growth.

ADRA acknowledges the traditional owners of this land and pays respect to the Elders past and present. ADRA extends that respect to other indigenous Australians.

President's Report 23 August 2016:

2016 has indeed been a year of many celebrations, the main one for ADRA being held on 30 June for its 30th Anniversary at the Australian Museum. The day was a resounding success for which ADRA warmly thanks the International Conferences and Events (ICE) team and in particular its director Raquel Robson for freely advertising the event. I note that we were to have our AGM in June but given the 30th anniversary celebrations the Board decided to hold the AGM at the August meeting; so here we are.

Collaborations:

ADRA has been very fortunate in 2015-2016 in establishing supportive links with various organisations one of which has been the GIO through its contact Cathie Thompson, who has forged excellent links with ADRA that has enabled it to grow even stronger. ADRA acknowledges the support given by Cathie and her counterpart Samantha whose details can be found on the ADRA website for those wishing to avail themselves of ADRA's insurance policy for mediators.

Further collaboration occurred with ADC when ADRA was invited to attend the ADC ball on 13 August, 2016 in which the first ADR awards were held nationally and internationally for both corporate and individual members. ADC's award night also featured an auction where money was raised for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Scholarship Fund and ADRA was proud to support such a cause. As president of ADRA I attended the event which was a huge success and ADRA looks forward to supporting ADC with the next Awards.

ADRA has also been invited to participate in the Global Pound Conference which will be held in Sydney in 2017 co-ordinated mostly by Resolution Institute. ADRA looks forward to this collaboration and hopes that Australia can be accepted by the international dispute resolution community as a viable venue for Dispute Resolution in the Asia- Pacific region.

ADRA is also proud to announce that it has been endorsed by the Australian Psychological Society (APS) as a voluntary membership organisation with which it can collaborate to present joint seminars with its Dispute Resolution and Psychology Interest Group. We are further pleased to announce that Dr. Emily Kwok who is the convenor of the DR and Psychology Interest Group is also now on the board of ADRA and we look forward to her input as a Board member and also look forward to establishing joint events in 2017.

In addition ADRA also looks forward to holding joint seminars/events with the College of Counselling Psychologists of the APS as it already has done with the Australian and New Zealand Association of Psychiatry, Psychology and Law (ANZAPPL) in its first joint seminar on 3 March 2016 where Dr. Eman Sharabem was the distinguished guest speaker.

Through Andrew Wong, ADRA has also established links with the Young Global Leaders group from Macquarie University who now advertise our events on their website. Many thanks to Andrew for his ongoing initiatives and support of ADRA's executive functions despite his many current obligations to complete his Masters in Forensic Psychology. It is hoped that links forged with young people such as Andrew, Raquel and Global Leaders can serve to entice further young people to be active in the dispute resolution world.

And, in relation to links with the Law, ADRA has supported the quest to reintroduce the two words 'or conduct' into Rule 15 of the proposed Uniform Barrister Legal Practice Rules, making it possible for barristers to hold a practising certificate for conducting alternative dispute resolution procedures as their major practise. ADRA noted the judgement of His Honour Besanko J in the matter involving Mary Walker and the Bar and resolved to support the request from Senior Counsel for further consultation on this matter.

DR Industry Forum

ADRA has also maintained its position on the Steering Committee for the DR Industry Forum which has now held the 3rd Industry Forum day on 12 August 2016 with Ed Santow from the Human Rights Commission as the guest speaker. The 3rd Forum day saw the birth of the Forum website as a response to the need for a unified voice from the DR Industry with which to lobby government.

The Forum day began essentially as an initiative of ADRA in response to the Past Presidents' dinner in November 2013 and developed into a DR Industry response over the next three years. As President of ADRA I gave the welcoming speech at the Forum Day to remind participants of the Forum's achievements in 2014 and 2015; and to remind participants of the request they made for the steering committee to continue with organising a web-site. The speech and agenda for the day are both attached to this report. The 3rd DR Industry Forum conference day was also very successful. The participants accepted an on-line presence for the Forum which is currently being modified to include those organisations that wish to contribute.

The steering committee opened itself to further nominations and resignations and is happy to announce that another interim committee was formed to decide the content of the website. The website committee comprises of Deborah McFarlane from VADRA, Katherine Johnson from ADRA, Laurence Boule who was representing Resolution Institute at the Forum, Mary Walker who was representing the Law Council and Paul Lewis who was representing the Law Society at the Forum. Members of the steering committee stayed the same with the resignation of Jeremy Gormly who was representing ADRA. Jeremy was replaced by Laurence Boule in his international capacity as a member of the steering committee.

Given the immense upheaval of the DR landscape in 2015 which saw the amalgamation of LEADR with IAMA to become the Resolution Institute; and the amalgamation of ACDC with AIDC to become ADC, time was needed to see how the future of the Forum would unfold, particularly as the birth of ADRAC also occurred during that time. I am glad to say that the level of co-operation the Forum has continued to engender amongst the organisations attending the Forum Day makes it seem that the future of the Forum although still tentative is no longer so unsure. ADRA takes credit for promoting the continuation of discussions for this very important industry-wide initiative to take form.

Administrative Duties:

In addition to the Constitutional and administrative duties that were fulfilled in 2015-2016, the year 2015-2016 has also seen many more changes to our website with Simon now being in his third year of a three year term. The Board resolved to keep Simon on for an additional 3 years to customise various other features on our website as needed – eg the new GIO contacts for insurance etc. now that there has been a major re-structure for GIO and Suncorp.

ADRA is now able to offer an on line registration of membership applications, online registration for National accreditation, online registration for seminar events, publications that can be downloaded for free to the DR community, an executive members profile outlining their achievements; a ‘Jobs platform’ where ADRA advertises vacancies in the DR area; and a peer support program where new members are allocated to a ‘peer executive’ for ongoing accumulation of CPD points. ADRA has also confirmed with the MSB that the role-plays it conducts for the MPN sessions are in fact counted as suitable CPD points for our members and others in the DR community to count towards the requirements for their national accreditation.

ADRA has also introduced a peer support scheme to encourage greater participation from our members through the personal contact and encouragement with an executive peer to whom they have been allocated. Time spent together counts towards accruing CPD points via supervision and/or personal support.

Seminars and MPN’s (Mediator Practice Network sessions)

ADRA has also conducted a seminar on 2 March 2016 with Dr. Eman Sharabeem in line with ADRA’s theme of Building Community through DR. This was the first joint seminar ADRA held with ANZAPPL and is looking forward to further such ventures. DR. Sharabeem attended the session having just had treatment for her illness at the time for which we are incredibly grateful. She gave a very successful and engaging talk to 26 participants on “Women’s rights and dispute resolution in Muslim Communities: Building an Australian Community”. ADRA thanks Andrew Wong for advertising this event with the Global Leaders group from Macquarie University. Several members from Global Leaders attended Eman’s talk and were very impressed. It is hoped that the younger generation will continue to be interested in DR seminars of this calibre and will become members of ADRA. ADRA remains keen to explore how DR affects the building of community – an area that tends to be overlooked in the competitive corporate world of financial settlements.

In addition ADRA continues to offer Mediator Practise Network sessions which it set for 4 occasions in 2016; the first being the 7 March with the topic of 'Intake and Initial Assessment (with Wendy Buchanan and Margaret McCue); the second being 4 June on Agenda Setting, with Paula Castile and Jane Houselander . The Third MPN is due for 5 September with Wendy Buchanan and Peter O'Brien and the last session is due on 3 December with Salli Browning and Mary Rebehy. Details of these events can be found on ADRA's website. The MPN sessions are very well regarded by those who attend; some attendees coming from interstate. Participants pay \$10/ session if an ADRA member and \$25 if a non-member for professional input. Non –members are encouraged to join ADRA for other benefits as listed above on our website. ADRA warmly thanks all the presenters of its seminars and MPN sessions who have generously given their time, knowledge and experience to make ADRA the very grass roots organisation that it is.

There were 16 events held in 2015, 11 of which were the MPN sessions, 4 of which were seminars and a Xmas party – all of which were held at the Law Society with the exclusion of the Xmas party which was held at the VIBE in Goulburn Street. In 2016 we were pre-occupied with hosting the 30th celebrations at the Australian Museum which as stated previously was a resounding success. If we add the planning session in January 2016, the workshop held by Simon for accessing campaign Monitor details and the many teleconferences and meetings held to prepare for the 30th Celebrations and for the DR industry Forum conference held on 12 August 2016, it has indeed been an extremely busy year. We anticipate holding the ADRA Xmas party on 29 November 2016 at a venue yet to be decided.

New Award of Fellow:

Following the very successful first DR Industry posthumous award for Jennifer David on 26 August 2014 that was initiated by ADRA, the Board further initiated a new membership award of 'Fellow' in May 2015 for those ADRA members whose contribution to the DR community was outstanding. The first of the two awards went to Laurence Boule, who was the guest speaker at the 2015 AGM, and the second to Dr. Anne Ardagh who presented an outstanding summary of the history of ADRA at the 30th Celebrations which will hopefully be published in about November 2016 in a special edition in the Australian Dispute Resolution Journal as will be the other talks held at the celebrations.

Future activities.

ADRA intended to invite the founders of QUT mediation clinic to discuss how they managed to offer real mediations to newly trained accredited mediators with the aim of setting up something similar in Sydney. Due to the enormous amount of time taken in preparation for the 30th celebrations and for the Industry Forum Day however, we decided not to follow through being mindful that the DR landscape has changed considerably since then. ADRA is also mindful to be present for the NMC to be held at the Gold Coast from 12 -15 September 2016 and realistically decided not to spread its resources too thinly.

Posthumous Award for Micheline Dewdney.

It is now with great sadness that ADRA will host a posthumous award this evening for Micheline Dewdney. About four weeks prior to the 30th celebrations Micheline rang me excited to attend the conference and to confirm details of her attendance. I

mentioned that we all looked forward to seeing her and was therefore very surprised when she did not arrive on 30th June. I called Micheline's home phone number the next day to be informed by her husband John that Micheline was in intensive care. On her arrival home soon after, ADRA sent flowers which her son Tom said she was delighted to receive. Shortly thereafter around 30th July, Micheline passed away but will always stay with us for her immense contribution to the DR industry in Australia. ADRA has invited Ruth Charlton to speak on behalf of Micheline who was a Life Member of ADRA. Ruth will accept the Posthumous Award for Micheline to give to her husband John who cannot make it to the AGM dinner. Micheline's immense contribution and her frequent unexpected visits at ADRA board meetings will be sorely missed as will her grace, wit, and humour.

Members of the Board and Associates

Finally I want to express my sincere gratitude to all my fellow board members for their on-going hard work and support every month as they continue to brave long distance, bad weather, cold nights and too much work to still attend a voluntary meeting. This is my third year as President of ADRA following the change of term in the Constitution from one year to two years per term. I am glad to say that I am still willing to see out my last year which will end in June 2017 when I will comfortably hand over a very successful ADRA to the new President. ADRA's continued activities since 1986-7 as a volunteer organisation and powerful catalyst in the DR world, is due solely to the important hard work and wonderful dedication from its volunteer executive members who continue to maintain their collaborative spirit which gives ADRA its excellent reputation and allows it to thrive.

A special thank you therefore to the
ADRA Board Members for 2015-2016

President – Katherine Johnson
Vice President – Peter O'Brien
Treasurer – Margaret McCue and Andrew Wong
Secretary – Wendy Buchanan
Membership Officer – Dennis Nolan
Accreditation Officer – Peter O' Brien .

Current Board Members.

Ann Fieldhouse, Jane Houselander, Frank Astil, Mark Brady, Salli Browning.

Web-designer:

Simon Olsen

Thanks too, to Peggy Lin, for her valued on-going contributions to the Board.

**Katherine Johnson,
President,
July 2015- 26 August 2016.**