

# ADRA

Australian Dispute Resolution Association Inc.  
Established 1987

## Annual Report 2002

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## **ADRA Board Members 2001/2002**

**President**

**Val Sinclair**

**Deputy President**

**Salli Browning**

**Secretary**

**Ruth Charlton**

**Treasurer**

**Paula Castile**

**Newsletter Editor**

**Marilyn Scott**

**Board Members**

**Tania Sourdin**

**Garth Brown**

**Katherine Johnson**

**Ian McKendry**

# Annual Report 2001

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## **President's Report**

The 2001/2002 year has been a challenging and productive year for the Board of Management. The Board started the year with a wealth of creative ideas. Our planning meeting then assisted us to prioritize our goals for the year. Despite numerous challenges facing the Board during the year the majority our high priority goals have been met.

### **Planning Meeting**

Our planning meeting expertly facilitated by Salli Browning established a number of objectives for 2002.

The first goal was to ensure our membership database, office management and Board Secretariat functions were running smoothly to enable ADRA to carry out our key activities effectively.

The second goal was to make changes to reduce our expenses and increase income. The planned strategies were to reduce office expenditure, particularly rental expenses and to increase membership.

The third goal was to provide improved services to Members. Two main areas were identified: improving information to members, and providing seminars, functions and conferences to members for the purpose of skill development, professional development and support, networking, socializing and keeping up to date with industry information and directions.

Goals in progress were to provide submissions and lobby as required to increase links and alliances with other organizations and to continue to explore the issues of standards and a representative (peak) body.

### **Challenges for ADRA**

Our most pressing challenge for the year was to find alternative and cost effective accommodation for the ADRA office. We thank Stella Cornelius for our years in King Street at a minimal rent. However, an increase in rent that was not able to be sustained by ADRA and the sale of the building necessitated a move. We thank Garth Brown for introducing us to Peter James who has offered ADRA accommodation in his offices in Barrack Street. ADRA is now established in James Legal in Barrack Street and we thank Peter James for his support without which ADRA would not have been able to continue to function effectively this year. We love our new space.

Our second challenge was to improve our Membership data base and the functioning of administrative services. Graeme King, computer expert came to our rescue. He has worked wonders and upgraded the data-base and functions. We are now able to E-mail information to our members and he is currently working on our Website. We thank Graeme for his great work.

Our third challenge was to provide a range of Services to Members to meet their needs. The Membership services report outlines the range of functions held this year offering networking and professional development opportunities to Members. Identifying the differing needs of our categories of membership will be addressed further in 2003. The establishment of our e-mail facility has increased ADRA's ability to provide easy access to current information for our members. Discussions have commenced in regard to changes to the content, format and distribution of our Newsletter so that it better meets the needs of our members.

This year ADRA has maintained the facilitative role established with the Let's Talk Group. ADRA has communicated with other ADR Membership Organisations in regard to working together co-operatively to address issues of standards and a national voice with the aim of maximizing our resources and impact. The outcome of these discussions will be developed further in 2003.

#### **With thanks to.....**

Our greatest challenge this year was to try and achieve all of our goals with a number of board members out of action. Despite both Ruth Charlton and Paula Castile suffering chronic illness, they continued to contribute to the best of their ability and we thank them for their contributions. I wish to personally thank Salli Browning, Deputy President, for her consistent and valuable support. I also want thank Tania Sourdin for her amazing energy, creative ideas and consistent support of ADRA. We congratulate Tania on her new position as Professor at La Trobe University, Melbourne and for becoming a member of the National Alternative Dispute Resolution Council (NADRAC). We know that our loss will be their gain and we wish her well in her new positions. We know that our strong links with Tania will remain wherever she is.

Many thanks to Garth Brown our only remaining and treasured male on the Board this year. We have not only valued his legal expertise but also his office moving abilities. Without Garth and his seemingly tireless efforts with his car and trailer, the ADRA office would not have happened. Thank you also to Tania who gave up a Friday night and worked non-stop with the move despite having the flu. Her organisation of the office (and the workers) was outstanding. Thanks also to Katherine Johnson for her contributions and assistance in building relationships with other organisations. Both Ian McKendry who moved to Melbourne, and Marilyn Scott owing to work commitments have been unable to contribute as much this year and will not stand again. We thank them for the contributions they have made to ADRA in the past.

The year ahead will bring ongoing challenges for ADRA. However, as a result of the outstanding efforts and achievements of this year's board ADRA is ready and prepared to meet those challenges.

Val Sinclair  
President

## Membership Services Report

### Meeting the Needs of ADRA Members

This year ADRA continued to try to ascertain the needs of its members and to develop initiatives that would meet these needs within the constraints of resources available to the organisation.

Over the year, ADRA held a number of functions that were aimed at networking amongst practitioners and facilitating the exchange of ideas, information and expertise. This opportunity for exchange and dialogue in itself can be an important process in supporting the professional development of practitioners. In addition to fulfilling this aim, one of the facilitated networking sessions was devoted to exploring member's needs in relation to professional development.

One of the resounding needs expressed was the need for easy access to current information. Specifically, some of the areas mentioned were the following: information on changes to legislation; information about new statutory or industry dispute resolution schemes; information on relevant policy directions; information on Overseas initiatives, information on visiting speakers; information on training and education courses and events; and information on useful publications and web-sites.

In the year to come, ADRA intends to make changes to the information currently provided to members in order to increase and widen the information made available. The time of writing pre-empts ADRA's planning for 2003, however it is likely that we will discuss changes to the content, format and distribution of the Newsletter, as well as continuing to provide the networking sessions mentioned above throughout the year. We look forward to seeing you there.

Salli Browning  
Deputy President

### Members Functions

The following functions were held during the year for members and friends.

A very successful Members Networking Evening and Welcome to New Members was held at the Law Society of New South Wales. A Discussion facilitated by Salli Browning focused on ***The Professional Development Needs of the Mediation Practitioner***. We thank members for their spirited involvement in these discussions in particular the Dispute Resolution team from the Department of Defence who flew from Canberra especially for the occasion.

Our second function was a Lunchtime Seminar with Guest Speaker Linda Fisher. Linda gave an interesting and stimulating presentation about ***What Mediators Bring to Practice: Philosophy - Process - Personality - Prejudice***. The questions raised stimulated ongoing debate and philosophical contemplation for many of those who attended.

Our third function for the year was another Networking Evening at the Law Society of New South Wales with Guest Speaker Professor Tania Sourdin. Tania spoke about ***Recent Dispute Resolution Developments and NADRAC update***. This function was very well attended and very informative. The focus was on issues relating to a Peak Body, Standards and the introduction of a new NADRAC publication following on from their previous Definitions paper 'ADR Terminology: A Discussion Paper'. We thank Tania for a brilliant presentation and the introduction of her intriguing 'headless chook concept'.

Our grand finale function of the year was ***ADRA's 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner***. A report by Ruth Charlton follows:

### **ADRA'S 15<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY DINNER – Report by Ruth Charlton**

A great evening was had by all at ***ADRA's 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner*** held on 5 September at Tattersalls Elizabeth Street, Sydney. President Val Sinclair warmly welcomed over 40 members and guests to a very successful and fulfilling event. All Board members contributed to this success, with particular credit to Val Sinclair and Salli Browning. Guest of Honour was the Hon. Justice Terry Sheahan, a popular and witty speaker on all occasions, this ADRA night being no exception.

It was gratifying that all but four of the original 1987 Board Members were able to be present. These were David Newton (first Vice-President); Linda Fisher (first secretary) Maureen Carter, Micheline Dewdney, Gerald Raftesath, Janice Williams and Ruth Charlton. Unfortunately, the first President, Wendy Faulks was unable to attend at the last moment owing to health problems.

This was a chance to go down 'memory lane'. Some of the original board members spoke briefly of their recollections of the formation of ADRA, the ADR climate which prevailed at that time and the progress achieved since 1987. One speaker remarked that the '1980's people' were the true pioneers, the 'first wave', who in many ways opened the ADR pathways for the enthusiasts who followed. It was noted that one aim of the volunteer pioneers was to raise awareness of the ADR possibilities and that much of this awareness-raising was pursued in the midst of criticism of, and opposition to, the ADR concept from some traditionalists and some of those who were the status quo holders at that time.

An interesting point made by Justice Sheahan was that his first promotion of ADR actually occurred in the 1970's when he suggested to two dedicated adversaries that their dispute might be better resolved through negotiation and conciliation, which in fact proved to be the case.

As an indication of the development of ADR over the years, it was noted how many of the original Board Members, and indeed original subscriber members had gone on to forge full time careers in ADR either administratively or as mediators, bearing in mind that mediation in 1987 was usually a part-time or spasmodic occupation (ie don't give up your day job).

Linda Fisher produced a copy of the first ADRA newsletter which bore the headline *Mediation Thriving and Issues Proliferating*. While we may have enthusiastically over-emphasised the impact mediation was having in 1987, there

is no doubt the same headline could be run today, backed up by all the achievements which have occurred in the 15 years since, ADRA's inaugural meeting was a defining event in the history of ADR in Australia.

## **6th National Mediation Conference**

### **ADRA Workshop and Presentation**

The 6<sup>th</sup> National Mediation Conference, held in Canberra on 18 to 20 September, 2002 was an outstanding success. There were a broad range presentations from all areas of Dispute Resolution Practice and over 300 conference attendees.

The Conference was a valuable opportunity for practitioners to meet and network. There was also the opportunity for Organisations from all over Australia to meet and discuss issues of common interest and concern.

The ADRA Presentation focused on the opportunity to hear from a range of practitioners and other organisations their thoughts, ideas and proposals about common issues and future directions.

ADRA's presentation was titled:

### ***The Dispute Resolution Industry – Are we a Headless Chook?***

The Presentation involved a panel discussion and workshop aimed to address the following Practitioner issues:

- The history to date of Practitioner Professional Development and Support
- The links between Definitions, Competencies, Training and Consumer needs
- A National Professional Body – Arguments for and against
- Future Directions – The Let's Talk Code of Conduct, A Nationally agreed Set of Standards

ADRA Board presenters were: Ruth Charlton, Salli Browning, Professor Tania Sourdin and Val Sinclair

The workshop was facilitated by Garth Brown and Paula Castile recorded the session

The discussions that followed the presentation focused on the issues of training, existing competencies, a professional body and options for future directions.

The outcome from the workshop and other discussions at the conference was the need for ADR organisations to work together co-operatively rather than competitively and focus on addressing practitioner and consumer needs for ADR standards.

(Thanks to Tania Sourdin for the use of her story and graphic visuals for the Headless Chook)



## Treasurer's Report

As mentioned in the President's report ADRA moved its city office from King Street to Barrack Street at James Solicitors. The move has meant that rental cost did not increase this year and there will be a significant reduction in rental costs in the future thanks to the generosity of Peter James.

There was a significant increase in revenue from the previous year and the net operating loss was significantly lower. This is despite the increase in expenditure.

There were minor changes to the accounts reported in 2001 Annual Report after the accounts were audited. The figures used in the following tables are those of the 2001 audited accounts.

### Statement of Revenue and Expenditure for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> September 2002

2001	REVENUE	2002
464	Conference and functions receipts	5,455
8,865	Membership subscriptions	8,575
-	Sale of publications	-
<u>9,329.00</u>		<u>14,030</u>

2001	EXPENDITURE	2002
1,500	Audit Fees	1,122
154	Bank Charges & State Tax	68
247	Conference and Function Expenses	5,466
886	Depreciation	618
229	Electricity	174
864	Insurance	1,270
2,364	Newsletter and Publications	1,278
639	Postage	706
111	Printing and Stationery	306
4,004	Rent	4,002
225	Sundry Expenses	61
954	Telephone	523
-	Traveling and Entertainment	-
-	Wages	-
<u>12,168</u>		<u>15,594</u>
2,839	Loss For The Year	1,564

	<b>OTHER INCOME</b>	
71	Interest received	37
2,768	<b>NET OPERATING LOSS</b>	1,527
13,838	Retained Profits – Beginning of Year	9,597
11,070	<b>ACCUMULATED SURPLUS AT 30/09/02</b>	8,817
	<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>	
300	Cash at Bank	990
9,299	Cash Management Account	7,827
<u>9,599</u>		<u>8,817</u>
	<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>	
2,471	Plant and equipment	1,853
12,070	<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	10,670
	<b>CURRENT LIABILITES</b>	
1,000	Other Creditors	500
11,070	<b>NET ASSETS</b>	10,170
	<b>MEMBERS FUNDS</b>	
11,070	Accumulated Surplus	10,170

Note: The accounts for 2002 have not yet been audited.

Paula Castile  
Treasurer