



Board Report

From ADSS Chair Andrew Ramsay

Introduction

I would like to acknowledge the and pay my respect to elders past and present to the Toorabul and Jagurra peoples, the traditional owners of the land on which we meet.

Thank you all for attending the second Annual General Meeting of the Asbestos Disease Support Society.

As we go into our third year as ADSS, I am pleased to report we are in a very good position.

The office has slowly introduced new technology that allows staff to work smarter and more efficiently; our governance is at a good level and improving; and our membership remains just under 700 members.

As you will see from our Financial Statements, we are also in a good position financially.

Thanks

On behalf of ADSS, we would like to thank the construction industry for its ongoing support for our Charity Race Day, which contributes approximately 20 per cent of our budget. We also continue to receive a grant from Queensland Health, which represents about 16 per cent of our budget. The rest of our income comes mainly from donations and sponsors.

Our two main donors are members of the CFMEU (Qld and NT Branch) and our close associates, Turner Freeman Lawyers.

Activities

Whilst all our activities are reported in the Newsletter to members, I would like to highlight a few areas of work that we are very proud of.

Over the 2016/17 financial year ADSS held twelve morning teas across Queensland. All bar one was held outside of Brisbane:

- Gold Coast
- Redlands
- Rockhampton
- North Lakes
- Toowoomba
- Kingaroy
- Ipswich
- Bribie Island
- Maroochydore
- Darwin
- Chermside

We also had exhibits at the:

- Gold Coast Home Show

- Rockhampton Home Show
- Asbestos Awareness Week in Radacliff Place
- Brisbane Home show
- Roma and Charleville Shows
- Darwin Camping Show

Other events included:

- A Meso Warriors High Tea
- The Brisbane Symposium
- Ecumenical Service at St Stephens Cathedral
- An Awareness Stall for Health and Safety Month

ADSS representatives also participated in:

- Asbestos Safety Eradication Agency International Conference
- South East Asia Asbestos Ban conference
- ADAO Conference
- Parliamentary Group Asbestos Related Disease in Canberra

On top of all of this we were still able to donate \$50 000 to ADRI for Research and a Versacare Bed and Humidifier to the Princess Alexandra Hospital.

ADSS also commenced advertising in RACQ's "The Road Ahead" magazine. This has been a great success, as we are having people who previously didn't know we exist contact us and it also reminds current but perhaps less-active members that they are members.

Awards

The ADSS Board of Directors was also very pleased to make the following Awards at our Symposium last year:

Life Membership-

- Mrs Patricia Cini
- Mrs Beverley Robertson
- Mrs Eileen Stagg

Life Membership is the highest Award available to a member in recognition of the exceptional contribution of an individual to the existence or effectiveness of the Asbestos Disease Support Society. It is therefore only to be awarded in exceptional circumstances, and does not have to be awarded each year.

For consideration for a Life Membership Award, an individual should have:

- demonstrated significant, sustained and high-quality service to ADSS
- an ongoing commitment to ADSS as a volunteer and/or Board Director
- demonstrated a commitment that does not seek personal reward,
- demonstrated a commitment to the values of ADSS
- been a member for at least 10 years
- made a significant contribution in terms of time, effort and commitment to ADSS

In Appreciation Awards to:

- Dianne Ellis
- Andrew Ramsay

This Award recognises those individuals or organisations who given a minimum of 5 years commitment in their service to the Society beyond their normal role.

This award reflects the importance of the contribution of the individual or organisation to the ongoing sustainable operation of the Society.

Campaigns and Lobbying

ADSS continued our campaign for Keytruda to be put on the PBS list, and whilst Merc have reduced the payments, the cost is still quite exorbitant.

Asbestos imports continue to be a big issue and ADSS presented along with one of our members, Ian Robertson, at the Senate Inquiry into non-conforming building products in January of this year. The inquiry is due to report this month.

ADSS continues to lobby strongly on behalf of members and against exposures to asbestos not only here in Australia but on an international level as well.

Engagement

We surveyed our members at the end of last year and received very positive feedback on the work that we are doing, so thank you for your confidence in the organisation.

ADSS is proud to be part of a network of support groups around Australia and continue to investigate ways of how we can work co-operatively together. For the first time we have a national campaign around Asbestos Awareness this year. This was at the instigated by ADSS.

We continue to provide services for members such as:

- Access to the Support Officer – Services (Social Worker)
- Volunteer phone follow up
- Newsletter
- Occupational Therapy
- Dietician Services
- Legal Assistance through Turner Freeman Lawyers, who I have to say are second to none in the way they look after our members

These services have now been extended to the Northern Territory as well, where we opened an office or a “hot desk” earlier this year.

Close

I would particularly like to thank all the staff, our volunteers and the Board of Directors for all of their hard work. As you saw earlier, ADSS is in a good financial position, we have strong governance and a good program supporting sufferers; and we look forward to continuing our work over the next 12 months.

In closing, I would like to thank our members for their ongoing commitment to ADSS and we hope we continue to make a difference in your lives.